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[THE FESTIVAL OF ST. VALENTINE.]

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY. (FOR THE LONDON READER.)

We shall not trouble the reader with deep antiquarian investigation as to the origin of the peculiar observances of St. Valentine's Day, the subject being involved in some obscurity. Though the custom of sending presents, symbolic drawings, letters, and verses is of considerable antiquity, it does not seem to have any immediate connection with the martyred bishop and his sad fate. St. Valentine, according to the legend, was a priest of Rome, martyred for the faith in the year 270. He was first cruelly beaten with clubs and afterwards beheaded. The greater part of his remains are yet, it is said, preserved in the Church of St. Praxedes, at Rome, near the gate formerly called Porta Valentine, a name now changed to the Porta del Popolo. After all we incline to the opinion that the courtship and pairing portion of the observances have indeed a yet more ancient origin than even the martyred old bishop himself and we will tell the reader why.

About the middle of February it was the practice in pagan Rome to celebrate the Lupercalia, which were feasts in honour of Pan and Juno, whence Juno was called Februa and Februatia. At these feasts the names of young women were inscribed on tablets and placed in a box, whence they were drawn by the men, as chance directed, amid much merriment. The clergy of the early Christian Church, striving to eradicate the customs of heathen superstition, often by mutations of their form, in the present instance substituted the names of tutelary saints for those of women, and as the Lupercalia commenced about the middle of February, St. Valentine's Day was chosen for celebrating the new "name-feast." Of this opinion is the Rev. Alban Butler in his "Lives of the

Saints." How utterly impossible it is to extirpate altogether any ceremony, observance, or superstition to which the common people have become accustomed receives here another illustration. The people went back to the old custom of choosing sweethearts or mates, and, as this revived, the persons so chosen were called "Valentines," from the day in the calendar on which the choice was declared. Hence the glories belong to the calendarial day of St. Valentine rather than to the martyred old bishop himself.

Having premised this much, we shall leap over the dark ages at a bound, and come to the notices and usages of St. Valentine's Day, as we find them in our own country at the reawakening of literature, art, and civil and religious freedom, spread abroad and secured by the mighty invention of printing.

In the reign of our Edwards and Henries incidental mention of the feast of St. Valentine's Day occurs in household books, records, in family muniments, and in the poems of Chaucer and Lydgate. Coming to the reign of Elizabeth, when English literature first took a resemblance to its present form and substance, "the poet of all times," who never missed a piece of folk-lore, thus makes the love-dis- traught Ophelia chant her "snatches of old tunes:"

"Good-morrow, 'tis St. Valentine's Day,
All in the morning betime,
And I, a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine."

Again, in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," Duke Theseus, having awakened the cross-purpose lovers, Demetrius and Lysander, Hermia and Helena, with his hunting horns, bids them; jestingly:

"Good-morrow, friends, Saint Valentine is
past,
Begin these wood-birds but to couple
now?"

Not to multiply quotations, we may note that

from Chaucer and Lydgate (who died A.D. 1440), through Spenser and Shakespeare down to the latest scribbler in the "Poets' Corner" of the "Stoke Pogis Mercury," every rhymester, great and small, has essayed the praise of St. Valentine. A double number of THE LONDON READER might easily be filled with such effusions. One of the earliest extant valentines (in French) was written by Charles, Duke of Orleans, taken prisoner by the English at the Battle of Agincourt (1416). Among the prettiest of these old-world ditties is one by quaint Michael Drayton, the author of Polyolbion, a contemporary of our immortal Shakespeare. It well merits transcription. Here it is:

TO MY VALENTINE.

Muse, bid the morn awake,
Sad Winter now declines,
Each bird doth choose a mate,
This day's St. Valentine's;
For that good bishop's sake
Get up, and let us see
What beauty it shall be
That Fortune us assigns.

But lo! in happy hour,
The place wherein she lies
Is yonder climbing tower,
Gilt by the glittering rise;
Oh, Jove! that in a shower
As once the Thunderer did,
When he in clouds lay hid,
That I would her surprise,

Her canopy I'd draw
With spangled plumes bedight;
No mortal eye e'er saw
So ravishing a sight:
That it the gods might awe,
And powerfully transpire
The globy universe,
Outshining every light,

My lips I'll softly lay
Upon her heavenly cheek,
Dyed like the dawn's g-d-y
As polished ivory sleek;
And in her ear I'll say:
"O, thou bright morning star,
'Tis I that came so far
My Valentine to seek."

Each little bird this tide,
Doth choose her loved peers
To constantly abide
In wedlock all the year;
As Nature is their guide,
So may we two be true
This year, nor change for new
As turtles coupled are.

Let's laugh at them that choose
Their Valentines by lot,
And wear their names in use
Whom idly thus they got;
Such poor chance we refuse,
Saint Valentine befriended,
We thus his morn may spend,
Else, muse, awake her not.

One more Elizabethan poet puts in an irresistible claim, though writing in the succeeding reign of the First James.

On St. Valentine's Day, 1614, took place the marriage which gave the present Royal Family to the throne of England. It was that of the Princess Elizabeth to Frederick, Count Palatine of the Rhine. An epithalamium by Dr. Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, a contemporary poet, thus apostrophises the Saint:

"Hail, Bishop Valentine! whose day this
is;
All the air is thy diocese,
And all the chirping chloisters
Of pretty birds thy parishioners;
Thou marryest every year
The lyric lark and the soft murmuring dove,
The sparrow that neglects his life for love!
The household bird with the red stomacher,
Thou mak'st the blackbird sing as soon
As doth the goldfinch or the bulcyon;
This day more cheerfully than e'er before
doth shine
"This day which might inflame thyself,
Old Valentine."

In the next generation we have, fortunately, in the garrulous Diary of "Master Pepys," a faithful facsimile of the domestic life of England in the middle of the 17th century. From him we find that some present, often a valuable one, was of necessity to be given to the choosing party. Old Pepys enters thus in his diary on:

"St. Valentine's Day, 1667. This morning came up to my wife's bedside—I being already up and dressing—little Will Mercer to be her Valentine, and brought her name written upon blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty, and we were both well pleased with it. But I am also, this year, my wife's Valentine, and it will cost me £5." This was a serious sum in those days, but see how the pleasant old gentleman consoles himself for this marital-tax: "but that I must have laid out if we had not been Valentines." And soon after we read, when speaking of the jewels of Miss Stuart, who became Duchess of Richmond:

"The Duke of York (afterwards James II.) being once her Valentine, did give her a jewel of about £800, and my Lord Mandeville, her Valentine this year, a ring of about £300." This might not fear comparison with the costly souvenirs of Eugene Rimmel. Indeed, at this rate, both givers and receivers must have had good cause to remember Saint Valentine.

Next year, 1668, Pepys notes: "This evening my wife did, with great pleasure, show me her stock of jewels, increased by the ring she hath had made lately, as my Valentine's gift this year, a Turkey-stone (turquoise) set with diamonds. With this, and what she hath, she reckons she hath one hundred and fifty pounds' worth of jewels of one kind or other, and I am glad of it, for it is fit the wretch should have something to content herself with." The reader must remember that "wretch" was, in Pepy's time, a term of strong endearment. Thus Othello:

"Excellent wretch; perdition catch my soul
But I do love thee, and, when I love thee
not,
Chances come again!"

In the reign of Queen Anne we find a notice of

the ceremonies mentioned in the beginning of this article surviving in English society, involving also a trace of the old "game of forfeits." M. Meisson, an amusing traveller, in his tour through Britain, tells us: "The young folks in England and Scotland hold a little feast on St. Valentine's Eve. An equal number of maids and bachelors get together, and each writes his own or some feigned name on a separate billet. These they fold up, and then draw by the way of lots, the maids taking the men's billets, and the men those wrote by the maidens. This way each of the young men light upon a young girl who is called his Valentine, and each of the maidens get a young man's name, who is hers. Thus each has two Valentines, but only thus far: that the young man must consent to the change and his first choice also, else the girl's draw is void, and the man's lot stands. This produces much merriment, but oftentimes the couples match. Fortune laying in this way divided the company into so many couples, the Valentines give balls, presents, and treats to their mistresses, wear their billets in their bosoms or on their sleeves, and so this little sport often ends in a love-match."

In these days of penny postage, cheap lace-paper, brilliant colour-painting, and ready-made rhymes, St. Valentine's missives have generally degenerated, albeit they have multiplied by myriads, nay, by millions, as the labours of sorters, letter-carriers, and the newspapers statistics of the penny-a-liners annually show. The approach of the 14th is now visible in every stationer's shop-window by the outburst of innumerable picture-sheets, with coloured designs of every order of merit, most of them with lines of unmitigated doggerel above or below. Many of these are sentimental, with transfixed hearts, blazing hymeneal torches or altars, with Cupids and a temple, or a parish church in the tableau. A less laudable tribe represent hideous and vulgar caricatures of the commoner trades, or of working mechanics, with insulting and gross rhymes, and on these seamstresses and servant-maids, and young fellows with little manners and less wit, think it "awfully funny" to spend their pence on the objects of their pointless satire. These, however, we are glad to say, judging by the want of novelty as well as merit in this class, seem in a deserved minority. Most of the Valentines are well-meant missives, or at least harmlessly sportive in their character.

There's a flutter in the kitchen,
There's a tremor in the hall,
The day is sure bewitching
The people, great and small.

A scented missive has inflamed
The soul of Mary-Hann;
It bears a heart transfixed, it comes
From Lord Highjinks' own man!

And Halfrid, who for whiskers,
And calves has not a peer,
Is spelling out a missive
Beginning "Honcley deer!"

* * * * *

Oh, dwellers of the kitchen
I love your simple ways
Your loves so unconventional
Deserve my simplest lays.

But loftier themes inspire me:
In the drawing-room above
Lady Vivienne d'Escocheon talks
With Bertie Binks of love.

The lady hesitates—the swain
His bribe for marriage raises;
Pin money thousands ten per year,
With jewels and postchaises.

Carte blanche at Swan and Edgar's he
The high-born maid assures—
She wavers, smiles, then whispers,
"It's done, dear Binks, I'm yours."

Thus sings a modern bard in some vers de société not destitute of merit.

We need hardly observe that this is the day popularly supposed to be that on which the little birds select their mates, and the influence of the day is supposed to add a certain degree of truth-pledge to the obligations entered into by those of either sex. Gay makes a damsel say:

Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind,
Their paramours with mutual chirpings
find,

I early rose just at the dawn of day?
Before the sun had chased the stars away!

A-field I went, amidst the morning dear,
To milk my kine, as housemaids use to do;
Thence first I spied, and the first swain we see,
In spite of Fortune shall our true love be.

The first person of the opposite sex met was thus the Valentine of the claimant.

A few lines on the poetry of "St. Valentine's Flower" shall close our little essay.

The crocus is dedicated to St. Valentine, and in the Language of Flowers expresses the "Pleasures of Hope." When we see the purple, golden, snow-white, or violet-coloured flowers bursting forth do they not impart a throb of joy at returning spring? The "Poet of the Seasons" sings:

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the snowdrop and the crocus
find.

Then comes the robin with his blithesome chirp and the poet imagines:

Then presently the crocus heard the greeting
and awoke,
And donned with care her golden robe and
emerald-coloured cloak,
And with her came her sisters, too, the purple,
striped, and white,
And the redbreast warbled merrily above
the flow'ers bright.

Welcome wild harbinger of spring!

To this small nook of earth,
Feeling and fancy often cling
Round thoughts which owe their birth
To thee, and in the humble spot;
Where chance has fixed thy lowly lot.

Thou art the Flower of Hope, whose hue
Is bright with coming joy,
Thy emblem's that of faith, too true
For ruin to destroy
For where, oh, where, should Hope up-
spring,
But under Faith's protecting wing?

Mary Howitt says of the purple crocus:

Like lilac flame its colour glows;
Tender and yet so clearly bright,
That all for miles and miles about,
The splendid meadow shineth out,
And merry village children shout
To see the cheerful sight.

Another poetess couples the snowdrop, the "Emblem of Consolation," with St. Valentine's Flower:

Above the garden beds, watched well by
curious eye,
Snowdrops with milky heads peep to the
softening sky,
And welcome crocuses spring up
With emerald stem and golden cup.

And so, wishing every fair reader of THE LONDON READER in town and country a happy choice in her Valentine, and every true lover the meed of his constancy, we close our desultory jottings on "St. Valentine's Day."

PHYSIOLOGY IN EDUCATION.

THE Convocation of the London University acted quite rightly, we think, at its last meeting in refusing to sanction the proposal that physiology should be made one of the compulsory subjects for a degree in Arts. Such a degree ought to mark general culture; and physiology cannot be taught as to become in the case of ordinary students a means of high intellectual development. It seems to us, however, that there are powerful reasons why the elementary facts of the subject ought to be taught in every school, and, above all, in schools for girls.

To those who know anything of physiology the ignorance which at present prevails with regard to it is almost incredible. Even educated men often know nothing of the position and functions of some of the main organs of the body; and the uneducated entertain the wildest notions as to every part of the animal frame which they are unable to see.

The results are frequently disastrous, for mistakes which a tyro in physiology would avoid are committed without hesitation by mothers and nurses—mistakes which make all the difference between a vigorous and diseased constitution. And men and women, in regard to their own health, sometimes

neglect precautions of which a very slight knowledge of physiology would show them the necessity.

The only way in which the evil can be effectually remedied is to begin instruction at school, and we see no reason why the instruction should not commence in young classes and elementary institutions. Children would be a great deal more interested in facts about their own bodies and the relations of these facts to others in the animal kingdom than in many of the dry subjects on which they are at present compelled to exhaust their mental energies; and every teacher who is in earnest about his work has now ample means of making himself acquainted with as much of the science as is necessary for his purpose. Sanitary laws are all very well in their way, but they can be of comparatively slight benefit unless the masses of the population understand something for themselves about the most essential conditions of health.

THE MISTAKE I MADE.

LET me see—where was it that I first met her? Oh, yes, it was boating by moonlight. A globe of reddish pearl slowly ascending out of the east—the shadows of the great bridge resting softly on the mirror-like surface of the river; the sound of a flute played softly afar off, and all of a sudden the keel of my boat coming sharply in contact with somebody else's oars.

"Hullo, you!" cried out a clear, incisive voice. "Where are you going to? Why don't you look which way you are steering?"

"Charley Dresden!" cried out I, little heeding the torrents of obloquy he was beginning to heap upon me.

"Old Mottimore," he responded, joyously. "Who on earth would have thought of finding you here? Come into my boat. Hitch on your old craft behind! Let me introduce you to Miss Sophy Adriance."

I looked as sharply at Miss Sophy as the moonlight and my own modesty would let me, for I knew that she was the especial admiration of my friend, Charley Dresden. I had heard her blue eyes and peach-blossom cheeks raved about until even my much-enduring patience had failed; I had listened to rhapsodies about her sweet voice and pretty ways. I had been called upon to criticise original poems composed in her honour until the subject had long since palled upon me—and here I had stumbled, as it were, upon her just as Charley was on the threshold of a declaration.

She was pretty, slight, and round and rosy, with china-blue eyes, a dimple in either cheek, and golden-brown hair worn in long, loose curls, with none of the fashionable abominations of crimps, frizzes, and artificial braids about her.

There was something flower-like and delicate in her prettiness—something unconsciously imploring in her way of lifting her eyes up to your face.

Hardened old bachelor though I was, I felt as if I could have fallen in love with her on the spot if I hadn't known so well that Charley had the first innings.

We rode home together—or, at least, as far as our way home as the river would take us. Sophy sang little boat ballads; Charley roared out tender bar-choles; I even essayed a German student song which I had learned in Heidelberg nobody knows how long ago, and we parted the best of friends.

A week afterward, Dresden and I met face to face in the street.

"Hullo, Mottimore!" said Charley, his honest visage lighting up. "What do you think of her?"

"I think she is a pearl—a jewel—a princess among women!" I answered, with perfect sincerity.

"Congratulate me, then!" cried Charley, beaming all over, "for I am engaged to her. Only last night! Look here!" opening a mysterious silver case which he took from his inner vest pocket. "What do you think of that for an engagement ring?"

"A fine diamond," said I, putting my head critically on one side; "and fancifully set."

"We're to be married in October," said Charley, lowering his voice in the most confidential tones. "It might have been sooner if I hadn't undertaken that business in France for our firm. But I shall be sure to be back by October, and the money I shall make will be acceptable toward fitting up and furnishing our new home. Because you know, Mottimore, I'm not rich."

We parted with a reciprocating squeeze of the hand, and Charley's bright face haunted me all day with a sort of reminiscence of what might have happened also to me if I hadn't have been five-and-forty, and with a bald spot on the back of my head. I spent an evening with her afterward at the genteel house where she and her mother—a nice, bright-eyed

little woman, the full-blown rose to correspond with Sophy's budding loveliness—dwelt in the cosiest of apartments furnished in dark blue reps, with a turn-up bedstead ingeniously designed as a high-backed sofa, and canaries and geraniums in the windows. It was a pleasant evening, and would have been still pleasanter if Charley and Miss Adriance had not both agreed by mutual consent to put me and the expectant mother-in-law on the same platform of old fogginess, and expected us to talk politics, religion, and the last new opera by the shaded gaslight, while they did the Romeo and Juliet business on the balcony.

I dare say they enjoyed it, but it was rather embarrassing, you see, to Mamma Adriance and me.

"It's so kind of you to come," said Sophy, with a gentle pressure of the hand when I went away. "I am so glad to welcome Charley's friends."

I felt that I could cheerfully sit through another evening of commonplace chit chat and photograph albums for such a reward as that.

Well, Charley Dresden went away, and as he didn't leave Sophy Adriance in my care, I didn't feel called upon to present myself at the genteel boarding-house where the blue reps and turn-up bedstead made such a feeble attempt at deception, and the canaries sang in the south windows.

I supposed naturally enough that all was going right, until one day I received a note from my old friend, Bullion, the banker, a man of sixty, who wears a wig and spectacles, and counts his income upon the double figures. Bullion was going to be married.

"Of course you'll think it a foolish thing for me to do," wrote Bullion; "but even at sixty a man has not entirely outlived the age of sentiment; and when once you see Sophy Adriance you will forgive any seeming inconsistency on my part."

"Sophy Adriance!"

Was this the way poor Charley's blue-eyed fiancée was serving him while he was abroad trying to earn a little money for her sake? My heart rebelled against the fickleness of woman.

I went straight to the genteel boarding-house. It was possible that I might be misled by a similarity of name, although even that was unlikely.

"Is Miss Adriance at home?" I asked of the stately servant girl who answered the bell.

"Lor', no, sir. Miss Sophy's spending a few weeks with a friend at Scarborough," she answered.

That was enough. I went home and enclosed Bullion's letter in another envelope, directing it to poor Charley Dresden's address, Poste Restante, Paris, adding a few lines of my own, wherein I endeavoured to mingle consolation and philosophy as aptly as possible.

"It's an ungracious thing for me to do, sending this letter," wrote I, "but I believe it to be the part of a true friend to undeceive you as promptly as possible. Bullion is a millionaire; Sophy is but a fallible woman, after all. Be a man, Dresden, and remember that she is not the only woman in the world who would rather be an old man's darling than a young man's slave."

And then I wrote, curtly declining to stand up with old Bullion.

It was but a few days subsequently that the waiter showed an elegantly-dressed young lady into my room at the hotel. I rose in some surprise. Aside from old Aunt Miriam Platt, and my landress, my lady visitors were few. But the instant she threw up her thick tissue veil I recognised the soft blue eyes and damask-rose cheeks of Sophy Adriance.

"Oh, Mr. Mottimore!" she cried, piteously. "I know you won't mind my coming to you, because you seem exactly like a father to me." I winced a little at this. "But I have received such a letter from Charley, and as you've known him a long time, I thought perhaps you could explain it to me. Oh, I have been so wretched! And indeed I don't deserve it."

She gave me a tear-blotted letter, and then sat down to cry quietly in the corner of the sofa until such a time as I should have finished its perusal. It was a fit mirror of Charley Dresden's impetuous nature, full of bitter reproaches, dark innuendoes, hurling back her troth and hinting gloomily at suicide. When I read it I scarcely wondered at poor Sophy's distress.

"What does he mean, Mr. Mottimore?" asked Sophy, plaintively, "when he accuses me of selling myself to the highest bidder? Oh, it is so dreadful!"

I folded the letter and looked severely at her. "Miss Adriance," said I, gravely, "it strikes me you are trying to play a double part here. The affianced bride of Benjamin Bullion ought hardly to hope to retain the allegiance of poor Charles Dresden into the bargain."

"I don't understand you," said Sophy, looking wistfully at me.

"Are you not about to become the wife of Mr. Bullion, the banker?" I asked, sternly.

"Oh, dear, no," said Sophy. "That's mamma!"

"Eh?" gasped I.

"It's mamma," answered Sophy. "She is to be married next week. Didn't you know it?"

I stared straight before me. Well, I had got myself into a pretty pickle by meddling officiously with affairs that didn't concern me.

"Look here, Miss Adriance," said I; "I will tell you all about it."

So I did. I described old Bullion's letter, my own false deductions therefrom, and the rash deed I had committed in sending the banker's correspondence to Charley Dresden.

"And now," said I, "do you wonder that he is indignant?"

Sophy's face grew radiant.

"But there's no harm done," said she. "No real harm, I mean. Because I have written him a long letter all about mamma and Mr. Bullion, which he must have received almost the next mail after he sent off this cruel, cruel sheet of reproaches. And pray, Mr. Mottimore, don't look so woe-begone," she added, kindly. "Your mistake was quite natural."

Sophy was a true prophet. There was no real harm done.

The next mail brought a letter full of entreaties to be pardoned, and a brief, brusque note to me, which told me, not in so many words, but in spirit, that I had a great deal better have minded my own business. Which I really think I had.

I stood up with old Ben Bullion and that full-blown rose, Sophy's mamma after all, and when Charles Dresden came home I cut the big wedding-cake at his marriage feast.

Papa Bullion gave the bride away, and people say that Sophy was the prettiest bride of the season. But it came pretty near being a broken-off affair at one time, and all through my fault. I've since learned to hold my tongue—a lesson none the less valuable for being learned late in life.

WHAT A WOMAN CAN DO.

As a wife and mother, woman can make the fortune and happiness of her husband and children; and, if she did nothing else, surely this would be sufficient destiny. By her thrift, prudence and tact, she can secure to her partner and to herself a competence in old age, no matter how small their beginning or how adverse a fate may be theirs.

By her cheerfulness she can restore her husband's spirit, shaken by the anxiety of business. By her tender care she can often restore him to health, if disease has overtaken his powers. By her counsel and her love she can win him from bad company, if temptation in an evil hour has led him astray. By her examples, her precepts, and her sex's insight into character, she can mould her children, however adverse their disposition, into noble men and women.

And by leading in all things a true and beautiful life she can refine, elevate and spiritualise all who come within reach; so that, with others of her sex emulating and assisting her, she can do more to regenerate the world than all the statesmen or reformers that ever legislated. She can do much, alas! perhaps more to degrade man if she chooses to do it.

Who can estimate the evils that woman has the power to do? As a wife she can ruin herself by extravagance, folly, or want of affection. She can make a demon or an outcast of a man who might become a good member of society. She can bring bickerings, strife and discord into what has been a happy home. She can change the innocent babes into vile men and even into vile women. She can lower the moral tone of society, and thus pollute legislation at the spring head. She can, in fine, become an instrument of evil instead of an angel of good.

Instead of making flowers of truth, purity, beauty and spirituality spring up in her footsteps, till the earth smiles with a loveliness that is almost celestial, she can transform it to a black and arid desert, covered with the scorn of all evil passion, and swept by the bitter blast of everlasting death. This is what woman can do for the wrong as well as for the right.

Is her mission a little one? Has she no worthy work, as has become the cry of late? Man may have a harder task to perform, a rougher road to travel, but he has none loftier or more influential than woman's.

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

THE DRAMA.

LYCEUM THEATRE.

THE Rev. H. H. Milman's poetical, effective, and beautiful play "Fazio," finds its way so much less frequently to the stage, that it is ever welcome to the critical as well as the sympathetic admirer of the higher class drama. In the heroine Bianca Miss Bateman has not, nor has had, few equals. The tender, loving woman, whose affection is tortured by jealousy into a fearful thirst for revenge, is most powerfully and vividly portrayed. Her final appeal drew tears from many an eye. Miss Pannofort played the Marchese Aldabella with dignity and self-possession, and Mr. Thomas Mead, an actor hardly appreciated at his true standard, was so impressive as the Miser Bartolo, whose ill-gotten treasures draw on the catastrophe, as to lend great assistance to the completeness of the performance. Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Brooks were commendable in their several parts, the latter gentleman's Fazio rising occasionally to artistic excellence. "Shakespeare's" Richard III. was produced on Monday, with Mr. Henry Irving in the "title" character. We shall have a word or two to say on this "revival," for such it really is, next week.

GAIETY THEATRE.

The playing public are under deep obligations to Mr. Hollingshead for the agreeable morning entertainments provided at this busy theatre. The revival of excellent plays is the next thing to the production of novelties, and in both these respects Mr. Hollingshead is far and away in advance of all metropolitan managers. One of H. J. Byron's best domestic dramas, "Dearest than Life," is among these, therefore the matinee, like most others, was crowded. Mr. Toole's Michael Garner *va sans dire*; but some of the minor dramatic personae deserve a mention. Mr. Young, as "Uncle Ben," brought down the house with his vigorous denunciation at the close of Act I., and Mr. Collette left us without hope of seeing a better Bob Gassit. Mr. A. Bishop sang his song in the first act with applause. Lucy found a charming, ingenuous, and pathetic representative in Miss Bessie Hollingshead. Go and see "Dearest than Life" at the Gaiety matinees, and you will have "a green spot in memory's waste" to look back upon.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

HERE the revival of Mr. W. S. Gilbert's comedy, "Pygmalion and Galatea," is an assured success. The play is one destined for long life, and to renew its vigour at intervals with a fresh hold on an appreciative public. There is a change in the heroine, Galatea, from Miss Robertson to Miss Marion Terry; yet what we lose in power, emphasis and classic style, we gain in delicacy, naive and simple, we had almost said, weakness; for this last is certainly an attribute of the fragile girl whom we see first warmed from marble into life, and then again, petrified at the world's harshness and her human creator's cruelty, shuddering back into lifeless marble. Pygmalion's wife Cynisea, vehemently jealous and witheringly scornful, found a fine impersonator in Miss Henrietta Holson. Myrine, too, was attractive, graceful, and pleasing in the acting of Miss Maria Harris. Pygmalion was well spoken for by Mr. Harcourt, but the part is a telling one. Mr. Buckstone was welcomed in Chryses, and his dry humour as the patron of art told immensely. Mr. Howe, Mr. Braid, and Mr. Weathersby resumed their former characters in the cast. "Follow the Leader," Mr. Rae's clever comediante, built on "Les Brebis de Panurge" of MM. Harey and Meilhac, opened the evening, and introduced Mr. Herbert to the Haymarket audience. He was supported by Miss Connie Lafontaine and Miss Kathleen Irwin. We all remember Mrs. Stirling as the heroine of this pleasant trifle.

EAST LONDON THEATRE.

"POMONA" is the name of a new three act play produced at this theatre, and now running with popular approval. It has some good situations, and contains the stock characters of this class of drama. There is a Lord Grafton who has married a gipsy-girl named Zingra (Miss Foster), but of course conceals the alliance. Their daughter "Pomona" has grown to womanhood under care of Zingra and a brutal

gipsy associate "Bill" (Mr. Burleigh). The gipsies are about to cut off the poor girl's hair for sale, when Ralph Branscombe (Mr. J. Carden) interposes on her behalf, rescues her and falls in love with her. Here's a pretty entanglement, seeing that Ralph's father intends his son for Lady Alice, the supposed daughter of Lord Grafton. Pomona goes into servitude, to earn her own living, with one Jonas Fuzzle (Mr. Wilton) a kind-hearted tradesman. The rest may be guessed: after all sorts of embarrassing positions, Pomona falls into the hands of her gipsy tyrants, to be rescued, at the proper time, and work out poetic and dramatic justice by attaining her rightful rank as Lady Grafton. Miss Jenny Grainger's Pomona was full of emotion and pathos, and drew down continued plaudits. Mrs. Jonas Fuzzle was extremely laughable in the hands of Miss Murray, and Lady Alice Grafton was elegant and lady-like as personated by Miss H. Wolff. The desperate and fiendish Zingra received a vigorous interpretation from Miss Foster. Misses Green, Roberts, T. Morrison, Carden, J. Milton, and C. Burleigh, all favourites in their several specialties with East End audiences, took pains in strengthening an unusually strong cast, formed by the union of the regular company with that of the Pavilion Theatre, just now running its pantomime. "The Mutiny at the Nore" is also included in the evening's bill of fare.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

HANDL'S Oratorio, "Solomon," certainly the most secular, dramatic, varied and florid of the works of the mighty master bearing the title of "Oratorio," has been given under the baton of Sir Michael Costa, and we hope, for the sake of the musical public, will be soon repeated. Madame Edith Wynne, Miss Julia Wigan, Madame Patey, Mr. Henry Guy, and Mr. Maybrick supported the solos, and the choral numbers by the Sacred Harmonic Society were splendidly rendered. This interesting work may fairly take its place as a relief from the overpowering grandeur of that chain of choruses, Israel in Egypt, and the stupendous "Messiah."

MYSTERY.

Far out on fancy's mystic sea
I see an isle most bright and fair,
Some call it love—some mystery,
And say much happiness is there.
I'll launch my barque, and set my sail,
And see myself what others see,
I'll stem the mighty wave and gale,
That I may know this mystery.

A heart shall be the isle I seek,
Bright eyes a compass for my guide,
And hope (a ship that's never weak)
Shall be the barque on which I ride,
I'll roam that mighty ocean o'er
Till I shall reach the blissful isle,
'Tis all I wish—I crave no more
To make my life one long sweet smile.

What different shapes some things do take.

What happiness is in a dream;
The vision changes when we wake
And fades from all it once did seem.
My barque sailed forth, I found that isle;

I drank the cup of love in haste,
'Twas filled with sorrow, pain and guile,
And left my life a barren waste.

J. T. R.

HORSE TAMING.

HISTORY repeats itself in horse taming, it appears, as well as in other matters. Mr. Rarey and Cruiser have met with their match in M. Carries and Trocadero. Trocadero, son of Monarque and Antonia, has of late exhibited symptoms of the most fearful ferocity.

According to "Le Sport," M. Aumont met M. Carries, who offered to tame the animal. M. Aumont having inquired whether the means employed would not be drugs or such violence as might injure the horse or render him still more furious, and having received an assurance that nothing of the kind would be used, he consented; and, at a time agreed upon, a visit was paid to the stud at Victot-Pontfol, and the experiments began.

The first thing was to enter the horse-box. This M. Carries did, in presence of M. Aumont and all the "stable," who "s'attendaient à le voir dévorer."

An exciting "duel" ensued; the horse rushing, time after time, with open mouth and with "hennissements féroces," at M. Carries, who merely dodged him with rapid movements aside, as the torador dodges the bull.

After ten of these attacks so met, "the animal suddenly stopped to contemplate the audacious individual who braved him in this manner, and was at once seized with the nervous trembling which comes over 'le luttteur aux prises avec un adversaire contre lequel ses moyens habituels ont échoué. Trocadero était dompté!'"

And M. Carries took advantage of the horse's stupor to put a saddle and bridle upon him, after which Trocadero submitted like a lamb to have his forefeet shod, and ultimately his hind feet, without more ado.

The dodging process of M. Carries certainly beats for simplicity even the throwing down process of Mr. Rarey; but it might be awkward if the tamer were to meet with a horse less susceptible of "stupeur" than Trocadero appears to be. The question suggested by all these horse-taming facts, however, is whether they could not be rendered altogether unnecessary by care taken in the original training, and whether, as regards the trainer and the method he adopts to his four-legged pupils, the gist of the whole matter does lie in what has been said by a French authority:

"S'il est brutal, le poulain deviendra farouche, violent et méfiant; si au contraire, il sait mettre l'animal en confiance, la bonne entente s'établira promptement."

It certainly seems that, if a horse in his years of discretion, or rather maturity, and of confirmed viciousness, can be tamed so readily by a resolute, gentle master, there ought to be little difficulty in training him up, during foalhood, like Capt. Cattle's fig tree, in the way he should go, so that when he is old he would not depart from it.

THE autobiography of Charles Matthews is said to be in preparation for the press. From the author's smart and easy style as evidenced by his pamphlets and letters in years by-past, no less than the arts, actors, authors, artists, and men of society, with whom the writer has been in contact or associated with, a most readable book may be anticipated.

Old Billy Moncrieff's "Tom and Jerry" is to be revived at the Surrey Theatre after Easter.

Three important sales by auction will take place in February: The Alexandra Palace, with its theatre, concert room, park, racecourse and grand stand, on the 8th., also Her Majesty's Theatre in the Haymarket, and the King's Cross Theatre.

We last week noticed the new opera founded on the tragedy of "Macbeth;" we have been informed that it has since been materially altered, and cut down to four acts.

Mr. Fred Evans, the pantomimist, who seriously hurt himself while playing at Drury-lane a fortnight ago, has recovered and resumed his role of clown on Wednesday night. He was warmly welcomed by a crowded audience.

Madame Christine Nilsson has raised an enthusiasm in Vienna by her charming impersonation of "Ophelia" in Ambrosio Thomas's opera of "Hamlet." Floral presentations and calls were the order of the night, and at the close of the fourth act her realisation of the hapless heroine was so perfect that there was quite a furore of applause.

The death of Miss Amy Fawcett, once a "leading lady" on the London boards, whose successes included Lady Teazle ("School for Scandal"), 400 nights, and Lady Gay Spauker ("London Assurance"), 200, may indeed "point a moral and adorn a tale." The once popular favourite died in want and obscurity in a humble lodging in Boston. After a short run of the piece in which Miss Fawcett appeared at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, she was "shelved," and not being paid her salary was, with her mother, compelled to seek cheap lodgings. She was a reserved and proud woman, and did not disclose her position, indeed, until the sad catastrophe which ended her life and sufferings, her whereabouts was unknown. The melancholy truth must be told, distress of mind and pecuniary embarrassment were aggravated by an indulgence in ardent spirits. Strong men have given way to similar passion on slighter provocation than poor Amy Fawcett, a weak woman, alone and friendless, and we may say deserted, in a foreign land. In justice to the profession in America, we must say that her whereabouts and condition were unknown. The "School for Scandal" will be played with Mr. John Gilbert as Sir Peter, Miss Dyas as Lady Teazle. Mr. Montague, Mr. Harry Beckett, Mr. Stevenson and Miss Adelaide Lennox represented the profession at her early grave.



[DRAWING FOR VALENTINES.]

THE THREE VALENTINES OF VERNON GRANGE.

A STORY WITH A MORAL. IN THREE
CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

It is a sequestered little village that known as Daisybourne, and though not "beyond railways," the Great Northern having a station only five miles by a cross-country road from its grey old parish church, yet the description given by Oliver Goldsmith of a Yorkshire village, in his immortal *Vicar of Wakefield*, might serve for a pen-picture of Daisybourne at the time of our story.

Old traditions, time-honoured observances, and simple customs of their forefathers lingered around its hearthstones and winter firesides; old pastimes were enjoyed upon its village green; there was a "trysting-tree" in the village churchyard, a "lovers' walk," a haunted ruin, and a "maiden's well," each with its varying tradition devoutly believed in. There was also a grand old Grange near Daisybourne, the Manor House or Hall, where dwelt an ancient Yorkshire family, belonging to those landed gentry whose ancestral name was held in higher esteem than even the created peerages of the crown. How can we convey a better idea of this unsophisticated community than by again reverting to our favourite poet, Goldsmith?

"And here, bedecked with every rural
charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The over-rippling brook, the busy mill,
The grey old tower that tops the verdant
hill,
The hawthorn hedge, with seats beneath the
shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made;
And then, at each returning holiday,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,

The merry village train from labour free
Led up their sports beneath the spreading
tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending while the old sur-
veyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the
ground,
And sleights of skill and feats of strength
went round,
And still as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band in-
spired;
The dancing pair who simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain unknowing of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the
place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance which would those
looks reprove;
These were the charms, sweet village, sports
like these
With sweet succession taught even toil to
please."

At Daisybourne, too, they kept up the Christmas carol, drew lots on St. Valentine's Eve, and tied true-love knots and broke rings on St. Valentine's Morn, ate pancakes at Shrovetide, sent idiots on sleeveless errands on the 1st of April, chose a Queen of the May on the first of the "merry month," feasted all comers at "harvest home," and cracked nuts, drew the crooked thorn from the witch-cake, and told fortunes on Michaelmas Eve.

What wonder, then, that on the vigil of the Hymeneal saint whose influence we this day invoke, a merry party of young persons, the bachelors and spinsters of Daisybourne, was gathered together in the spacious servants' hall of Vernon Grange, to celebrate the rites appertaining to the season. It is of this company we will now ask the reader to make one.

The old raftered hall was profusely decorated with boughs of evergreens, for the deciduous trees were yet leafless. Yet were there gay colours among the shining green branches of the bay, the laurel and the spruce fir, the white bursting clusters of the laurustinus, leafless sprays of the early-blooming almond, twigs of the scarlet-berried thorn, and trailing ten-

drills of the berried ivy were interspersed with bright handfuls of dried strawflower and bunches of yellow cudweed, while on shelves, dressers, and tables were arranged water-jugs and other vessels filled with sweet "nodding violets," white starry snowdrops, pale primroses, fragrant wall-flowers, and a shining wealth of the golden and purple crocuses especially consecrated to St. Valentine.

These floral harbingers of spring were mostly fresh gathered by the guests themselves on their way to the merrymaking, and if they did not make a flower-show which would excite the admiration of a M.R.H.S. or M.R.B.S. of South Kensington or Chiswick, would surely set aglow the heart of the lover of Nature, though as yet she had not entirely doffed her sombre winter garments. But we must turn to the living figures of the scene.

A rustic youth had just finished a rather clever performance, in which, while playing a pipe with his left hand and thumping a tabor with his right, he contrived, by means of a couple of strings attached to his knee and elbow, to give a grotesque dancing action to two wooden dolls suspended over a stout piece of plank. The applause and laughter were echoing through the raftered hall, when a buxom dame of some fifty winters, with a face beaming with benevolent pleasure, entered from the door which communicated with the dining and drawing-rooms. It was kind Mrs. Bland, the housekeeper of Vernon Grange.

On a tray she bore an inkstand and writing materials, pens, and a number of strips of writing-paper. She was followed by a youth whom all recognised as the son, and most probably the successor, of the village schoolmaster, who had taught the A. B. C., pothooks and hangers, addition, multiplication, and, it is reported, occasionally imparted the rule of three and practice to the juvenile jockies of Daisybourne in days when School Boards were not.

"Now, lads and lasses," cried Mrs. Bland, cheerily, "range yourself right and left, that I may count ye. Married folks, if there be any, must stand out. One two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. No, there are only eight young men to nine maidens. I'm ashamed of Daisybourne, that I am."

"Oh, never mind, Mrs. Bland," said Millicent Jarvis, the beauty of the village, who had already set half the young fellows of the hamlet sighing at

her scornful and disdainful reception of their sheep-faced approaches. "Never mind me; leave me out, please. I don't know I should have come only they twitted me about being too proud; which I know I'm not," added the petulant beauty, with a meaning glance at a pretty, plain-dressed girl who stood near her.

"Oh, very well, Miss Milly," said the smiling Mrs. Bland, with the slightest touch of sharpness in her tone, "we'll leave you out, by all means, if you wish it so. Now, young Birch, sit down here, and point your pen, and write down each name as I call them over."

The youth did as he was bid, inscribing a name on each paper, until eight young men's names and those of eight damsels were written. Mrs. Bland neatly folding each strip of paper, and placing the first eight in a small, open-mouthed bag on her right hand, and the next eight in another to her left.

"Now, Milly," said Mrs. Bland, "there is yet time for a ticket for you. It is seven draws to one you will not be the one left without a Valentine. Shall I write your name?"

It was evident that the capricious beauty was a little mortified at the readiness with which Mrs. Bland had at first accepted her refusal, and she had instantly engaged herself in a loud, almost laughing, conversation with old Mr. Adam, the upper gardener, to conceal her chagrin. Nevertheless, she gulped down her spleen, and declaring with another forced laugh, that she preferred a chat with old Mr. Adam to such sweetheating foolery, again declined to make one in the drawing.

Millicent Jarvis was the only daughter of one of the half-dozen shopkeepers of the small village. Her father dealt not only in thread, small tapes, merceries, shoes, linendraperies, and stationery, but owned the establishment where the ribands and laces, bonnets and finery, of the womankind of Daisy-bourne were purchased, except those procured by the peasants' wives from travelling pedlars, who yet hawked their wares in the less accessible villages of that rural district.

She was therefore not only the prettiest, but, to the envy of most of the young girls, and some of the elder, the most fashionably dressed damsel that the Sunday sun of Daisy-bourne shone upon, when young and old assembled in the old grey church; they did not even except the young Ladies Vernon, who, though the material might be more costly, certainly could not stand comparison in brilliancy of colour, or profusion of riband, feathers and flowers with the draper's daughter, Millicent Jarvis. As, however, we shall see more of Millicent hereafter, we will return to our Valentines.

The drawing of names proceeded amidst unrestrained shouts of merry and innocent jesting, in which the elder portion of the bystanders and good Mrs. Bland bore their full share.

The eight young men took their places in the order of their calling, and it now became the turn of the young women. This increased the fun; for three only of the first couples stood, and there were five double Valentines. But the men insisted upon their prerogative of first choice, and not one of them was ungallant or selfish enough to hesitate or change, but each, taking the hand of his partner swore himself her Valentine, and sealed it with a kiss.

And now a two-handled silver cup of antique form was filled with a ladie, bottomed with an old spade guinea, from a capacious bowl of "bishop," wherein spiced and sugared ale and toasted apples were craftily mingled.

Then the goblet, its handles enveloped with a fine napkin, was placed in the hands of each pair of Valentines, and the Valentine handing it to his partner, she kissed the brim, and sipped of the loving cup, as is maiden's wont, while the man, in more than one instance, after a vociferous "good health," took such a hearty swig in testimony of his devotedness as made it necessary for good Mrs. Bland to bring the spade guinea ladle into active requisition to replenish the half-emptied vessel.

Then came dancing, songs, forfeits, and a supper, so plentiful and solid that "good digestion" must have waited on appetite and health on both, to have avoided a bilious attack in the morning, which, we are ready to certify, not one of the Valentines either thought of or felt.

Coats, cloaks, capes and wrappers, ruffs, comforters and scarfs were "called" as the clock struck ten, and then each "squire of dames" offered his arm and escort to his Valentine to see her home.

Three of these couples were servants at the Hall, and the other three were daughters of small farmers in the neighbourhood.

Of the remaining two couples the writer knows sufficient of their subsequent histories to flatter him-

self that they may interest the curiosity and sympathy of the reader.

Jonathan Brinsley was a steady, shr-wd, and some said too calculating young man. He was much respected, if not beloved, by his nearest friends and associates.

He held the position of assistant collector, clerk, and buyer to his uncle, a well-to-do wool-stapler and dealer.

Jonathan was correct in manners and careful in his dealings, so far as the character of a young man of twenty-one could be judged of, and the elder folks supposed, as his uncle and godfather Jonathan Tebbutt had no children, young Brinsley must in due time have the business himself.

Some were rather surprised to see him there, but none suspected the true cause. It was that the steady young man had fallen, as he thought, in love with Millicent Jarvis, and he had actually come with some floating hope of being the lucky drawer of her name.

Scarcely, however, had Jonathan passed half an hour in her company, watching the silly homage that was paid by the thoughtless or the enamoured to the supercilious beauty, than his good sense occasioned something like a revulsion of feeling, so that when the petulant girl's refusal to join the drawing took place young Jonathan felt a positive relief.

We are all the creatures of circumstances, and local and surrounding influences often act with unusual power. Jonathan Brinsley stood up amused and indifferent to take his chance, and laughed when the name of Hetty (Esther) Langdale was drawn from Fortunatus's cap, yet he was really pleased when he saw the modest smile of satisfaction with which the demure Hetty heard her fortune.

But when, at the very first draw of the women's choice, he heard Jonathan Brinsley again coupled (for such things will fortitiously happen) with Hetty Langdale, he stood hesitating and amazed amid the general laughter and congratulation. He was soon, however, awakened from his abstraction.

"Bless the man!" cried the jolly Mrs. Bland. "Sure his wife are wool-gathering."

Catching the blushing Hetty by the hand, the old lady led her across the small space between the ranks, and playfully pushing the half-resisting damsel almost into Jonathan's arms, the latter, almost involuntarily, embraced her. The next moment, however, he not only squeezed her in real earnest, but imprinted so sounding a smack upon Hetty's lips that the merriment broke out afresh, this time unheeded by either of the principal performers.

Jonathan Brinsley, an hour before, had fancied he admired Millicent Jarvis. There was no doubt he already sincerely loved Hetty Langdale.

The fun proceeded, and now the lottery had but two names left in the wheel. Mrs. Bland looked along the lines, and all the couples smiled at each other.

"The strangest thing in all my experience, and that's not a short one. All matched but the last two, and they've no other than 'Hobson's choice,' and the youngest pair in the room, too. Dolly Westrop, you have only to kiss Robin Armstrong for your Valentine, as he has already one claim to you for his own draw."

The two remaining slips were cast forth, and Robin, seizing the fat hand of the blushing Dolly, whose plump cheeks outvied the scarlet peonies in her grandfather's front garden, dragged her away into a retired corner of the hall. When, half an hour after, Robin and Dolly rejoined the sports, the young man's clumsiness and the girl's shamefacedness had considerably lessened.

Robin Armstrong was bush-beater and gun-carrier to his father, old Robin Armstrong, the head-keeper at Vernon Grange, for though there was not a poacher in Daisy-bourne—the man that would have robbed the Vernon preserves would have been an outcast—the large head of deer, the extensive plantations, the wide gorse coverts, and the fisheries, required a number of outdoor servants. Of these Robin's parent was the head.

Robin, young as he was, was well-versed in all wood-craft. To a bold heart, except when in presence of the fair sex, he added a strong arm, a quick eye, and a steady hand.

As for Dolly Westrop, she was the orphan daughter of a carrier, who had perished on the wold in a fearful snowstorm many years before, and had been brought up to the age of sixteen by her dotting old grandfather, the parish sexton and bellringer. All that anybody ever had to say of Dolly was negative, which is a great thing; she had no envy, no vanity, no ill-temper, "never meddled with nobody's affairs," troubled nobody, was never sad nor sulky; so nobody cared to say anything of Dolly Westrop, except that she was "a jolly good girl."

The lads and the lasses are gone. The tables are cleared. Good Mrs. Bland has seen all the lights out and departed to resume her duties in attendance on the Vernons and their visitors. Another hour, and they too retire, and moonlight sleeps in silver silence on fantastic gables, quaint twisted chimneys, green grassy slopes, and tall ancestral trees of Vernon Grange.

* * * * *

When Millicent Jarvis had walked to the Grange, the last thing she could have imagined would have been that she should have been left without an escort home.

That privilege had generally been an object of contention.

What then was her surprise and vexation when she suddenly realised the fact that all the male sex who were not indwellers of the Grange, had, in parliamentary phrase, "paired off," and that only the retainers of the family remained.

Mrs. Bland, too, quickly perceived this unpleasant consequence of Millicent's self-exclusion from the votaries of St. Valentine, and was revolving whom she would select, when a funny solution of the difficulty presented itself.

Young Mr. Vernon, returning from the tour of Europe and a Mediterranean trip, had brought with him as his valet and courier, a French violin-teacher out of employment, who had taken up this more profitable calling.

M. Nicole Paganini d'Archet had often condescended to enliven the hall with the dances of Strauss, Lanner, Gungl, Musard and Labitsky, together with excruciating and unheard-of variations on themes from all the grand opera, while the wonderful selections he executed of the "music of the future" made many of the rustics wonder when he would have done tuning and trying his fiddle, and begin some intelligible tune or melody, which, on such occasions, it is almost needless to say, never did begin.

At the juncture we have arrived at, Monsieur Nicole Paganini d'Archet, fiddle in hand, and attired in full evening dress, appeared in the hall.

"Ah, monsieur," exclaimed Mrs. Bland, for whose maraschino, curacao, and parfait amour the Frenchman had a very keen relish, "you have indeed missed a chance! You might, if you had not been upstairs, have had the prettiest young lady in Daisy-bourne for your Valentine," and Mrs. Bland led monsieur towards Millicent, who looked by no means with her usual hauteur upon the bowing and smirking Frenchman, who, to say truth, was (unlike Mr. Toole) a perfect "master of deportment."

"Ma chere Mistrées Blan," said monsieur, "I am ravissé and toute desolé at zo same time. Pour quoi was I not call to accept my bonne fortune, an' zis young lady for my choice. Ah, m'amselle, que je suis malheureux."

Mrs. Bland, with a merry twinkle of the eye, here interrupted the Frenchman's flow of compliments.

"Excellent, good Mossoo d'Archet, but it's too late now. I have no doubt you are desolated, and all that sort of thing, and well you may be considering the chance you've missed. But I'll stand your friend," the ex-violin teacher stared at her curiously. "Yes, mossoo, I'll give you a chance to make up for lost time. You must see Miss Millicent Jarvis home to her father's house in Daisy-bourne."

Monsieur looked as if a dash of cold water had been sent down his spine. He glanced at his slight patent leather pumps, at his open-work silk socks, his superfine black trousers, and thence up to his white silk waistcoat with the openness of bosoms, and his embroidered shirt front, full as the pigeon breast of a pouting horseman. Mrs. Bland, however, affected not to observe his embarrassment.

"Oh, yes, I knew you would be only too happy, monsieur. Your nation certainly excels in politeness and gallantry to the fair sex. Millicent, my dear, Monsieur Nicole will be proud to—"

"Mais, ma chere Mistrées Blan, I have not dress for ze promenade."

"Oh, that is soon remedied; a pair of your courier boots and a great coat, monsieur, and—"

"Bote I shall not know one step of ze way to vat you call Daisybrun, not von step, so zat I will not find—"

"Poo! nonsense, mossoo. If you don't know it the young lady does. She only wants your arm and your gallant protection, and she can walk the path blindfold."

At this moment monsieur heard, as he thought, a reprieve. His master's bell rang.

"Zere, ma chere Mistrées Blan, I am demanded. I cannot stay one ozer moment. Ah, m'amselle, accept ze homage of my devotedness, but ze force majeure comm and my service. Adieu, au revoir, an' if eware I should have ze honneur on some ozer occasion—"

The bell rang again, and monsieur, kissing his hand, retired through the door, bowing with his face to Millicent, who stood dumb with mingled contempt and vexation. But what also excited her wonder was that Mrs. Bland immediately followed the Frenchman.

Mrs. Bland had a strong spice of humour in her composition. She had not exhausted her resources, and was resolved that the smooth-tongued Monsieur d'Archet should not foil her plan thus easily. She accordingly entered the ante-chamber of the supper-room, and awaited the directions given by Mr. Vernon to his valet, which related to his movements on the following day. Mrs. Bland, whom long and faithful service had made quite one of the family, now struck in.

"We have had a very merry party this St. Valentine's Eve, Mr. Wilfred," said she, "but by a curious accident, Millicent Jarvis is left without a beau to see her home. She came here alone, and unless Monsieur d'Archet will be gallant enough, there's nobody but old Mr. Adam, or his wife, or myself," and she laughed as monsieur thought, maliciously, "to see the poor girl home."

"What, pretty Millicent Jarvis, the merrier's daughter, without a swain to see her to her door?" said Wilfred Vernon, good humouredly. "If it wasn't for the proprieties, Mrs. Bland, I shouldn't mind such a journey myself. You surprise me! Nicole! where's your gallantry, that you did not fly to squire the beauty to her paternal roof?"

"Parfoi, m'lord, I would have done so volunteers; but you see I am en grande tenue for my violin concerto in *so grand salon*."

"We'll do very well without the concerto, Nicole; when a lady's in the case, you know, all other things give place. Nicole's at your service, and the lady's, for life or death. Make haste, Nicole, and uncuss yourself, and look more like a courier than a dancing-master. And, Mrs. Bland, if there are any letters by the early post, see that they are brought to my dressing-room. Nicole, you can lie a-bed an hour later in the morning. Let me see, it's about three miles, isn't it, Mrs. Bland? Six there and back. Good night."

M. Nicole was now truly "desolated," but he saw no escape, so he put a fair face on the matter, and accepted the situation, which, after all, might have been much less pleasant had the lady been old and ugly.

So that when Mrs. Bland returned with the intelligence that monsieur was dressing himself in all haste for the journey, and when, in a few minutes, the "gentleman's gentleman" made his appearance in a magnificent furred *roquelaire*, beneath which shone a pair of long boots of wrinkled *Mamel* leather, Millicent's anxieties and resentments vanished like a cloud, and her good looks were enhanced to loveliness by the most gracious of smiles.

M. Nicole, too, when once in for it, bore himself with brave assurance. Though the son of a waiter at a Paris *traiteur's*, my "gentleman's gentleman," like most "distinguished furnurers," claimed as his ancestors some historic family, dispossessed of all but their noble blood by the fury of democratic revolution; and Millicent's vanity making her ready to believe in every idle compliment, she retired to her chamber, after a faint, simulated resistance at the outer door to a salute from her moustachioed cavalier, with the full certainty of having conquered and enslaved the nobly-descended son of—a cookshop waiter!

But Millicent had other thoughts in her head than that of immediately retiring to rest. She, too, had her observations, notwithstanding her sneer at "sweethearting foolery;" and we doubt not the reader, when he is acquainted with them, will consider them not a whit less foolish, while they were by no means so open, innocent, and harmless.

Lighting her little lamp, the girl proceeded to open a drawer wherein a curious mixture of objects were presented to view. From these the damsel selected five green bay leaves; four of these she carefully pinned to the four corners of her snow-white pillow, and the fifth in the middle of the underside; and gently repeated from a little book she held in her hand—

Green bay tree, green bay tree,
Tell me to-night who my love shall be;
Grant I may see my true love dear,
And married be ere ends the year.

Next the silly girl, with trusting faith, took from the drawer a hard-boiled egg, and having cut it through the centre scooped out the yolk, and partly filled the space with salt.

Then, taking two pieces of paper, on each which she wrote a name, she loaded each of them with a ball of clay, and placing them in a basin gently poured water over them; the intent being to see

which of them would escape from its load and rise to the surface, that which rose being the name of her future husband.

The last ceremony was taking the halves of the hard egg and eating them deliberately, shell and all! These curious and superstitious rites performed, Millicent Jarvis extinguished her lamp, gazed for a few moments on the bright, mysterious face of the moon, flecked with fleecy clouds, and crept into bed. What were her dreams we cannot communicate, as we don't know she ever told them.

It is Valentine's Day in the morning, and the wintry sun is peeping in at the white curtains of Millicent Jarvis's window. She is awake, but has not yet risen, her reason being that she is resolved not to see any one of her sweethearts except him—and who is he? Time will show.

The vicar of Daisybourne was an exemplary clergyman of great scholastic attainments, with a large family and a small stipend. After taking high university honours, he had, from lack of patronage, been fain to settle down in Daisybourne. To increase his annual income he had been accustomed to take young university men to read and finish for classical honours.

At this time one of two young undergrads, boarding at the vicarage, the Hon. Spenceley Dashwood, frequently waylaid Millicent Jarvis in her walks. We say waylaid, for though the silly girl believed the meetings to be purely accidental, and owing to some mysterious luck, predestination of love, or the like, young Spenceley Dashwood planned them as deliberately as ever footpad planned the waylaying of his victim.

The reader will not be surprised then to find that the "honourable" young gentleman was early on foot on Valentine's morn.

Calling on Robin Armstrong's father, who had the care of his double-barrelled breechloader of the old Lefauchaux pattern, young Dashwood strolled into the meadows at the rear of the houses in the High Street, where Millicent's widowed parent resided.

Two or three discharges at jays or redstarts, or perhaps nothing at all, startled the coquettish beauty to a sense of the world without, and a sort of certainty that the man she must see first that morning was at hand.

Another barrel exploded yet nearer, and then the maiden saw young Dashwood, gun in hand, in the field at the back of her dwelling.

Her casement opened; a pink silk handkerchief fluttered in the air; the young man lifted the latch of a wicket at the bottom of the garden with a practised facility.

Next moment he was beneath her window; and the next the "biglietto, *gio scritto*," of our imprudent Rosina was caught and pocketed by her faithless Almaziva, without Figaro, the town barber, knowing anything of the matter: for pretty Millicent had no suspicious old Doctor Bartolo for a guardian, not even a watchful mother or a grave duenna to check her even in her wildest flights of flirtation. Her Valentine, accordingly, did not depart stealthily with his billet-doux: no he.

"Hist, Millicent!" said he, in a stage-whisper, at the same time holding up a lovely enamelled box, brilliant with gold net work and painting. Millicent showed her pearly teeth, and, with a suppressed laugh, caught the gilded treasure in her lap, like another Danaë; though here the classical simile fails, as the ascending gage d'amour, dely tossed by the Valentine, was caught by the lady in a full trimmed and embroidered apron.

Young Dashwood blew a kiss and a "good-bye for the present" to Millicent, not, however, without an appointment for that evening; and off went the young rake, humming,

"Meet me by moonlight alone,"

while Millicent Jarvis sat down to examine the gay gift she had thus received from her noble Valentine.

The scrutiny was more than satisfactory, it was delightful.

The first layer within the spring-clasped little cabinet, was, it is true, somewhat like "coals to Newcastle," consisting of some pretty ribbon-knots of various colours, with gauze and lace articles, in which Millicent was a professional connoisseur. They were, however, costly in material, which proved the liberality of the donor.

Next came a lovely perfumed sachet, stiff with gold and silver thread, and diffusing an exquisite odour through the little chamber.

Scarcely had Millicent recovered from the potent effluvia of patchouli and musk which quite overpowered the wholesome and simple lavender that lent fragrance to the hangings and bedlinen, than a new surprise awaited her.

A sheet of pink wadding was raised, and there, encircled by coils of a golden serpent with car-

buncle head and diamond eyes, lay the loveliest little watch her eyes ever beheld.

Its back was towards her, of deep blue enamel bordered with large pearls; a smaller circle of the same precious oyster-excrecences bordering a cow-slip-coloured enamel disk, whereon appeared an old English black letter "M," interwoven with minute pale blue forget-me-nots.

Millicent gazed upon it with the abandon of delight which Adelina Patti so charmingly assumes when, as Margherita, she discovers the glittering jewels deposited by Mephistopheles, as the bribe-price for her innocent soul.

Millicent Jarvis was not naturally disposed to evil; but her love of dress, and finery, and personal vanity, were a passion which

"Like Aaron's serpent swallowed all the rest."

Carefully depositing the serpent-chain in the casket, not, however, without first adorning herself therewith, and admiring herself in the lid-glass, as does also the hapless Margherita, Millicent descended to the little breakfast parlour. Her methodical parent had long since taken his morning meal, and her filial affection was not much fortified when her parent, who was a man of few words, said some half-dozen rude things about duty, negligence of household affairs, idle visitings and gossipings, and wound up by a reflection as to what would have become of his business, of himself, and of herself, if her departed mamma (whose perfections he had only discovered since her loss) had so neglected his interests and comforts, and her attention to the business and shop, which had secured her a comfortable home, and, perhaps, if she behaved herself, a future competency.

The sting of this preaching was barbed by the fact of its being delivered in the carshop of Miss Broadfoot, a lady of an uncertain age, once a struggling dressmaker in a neighbouring town, whom Mr. Jarvis, on the decease of his wife, engaged as a sort of shop-assistant, needlewoman, and housekeeper, and to whom the over-looking of Millicent, before she entered her teens, had been also entrusted, and who, in consequence, hated Miss Broadfoot most cordially.

Miss Broadfoot had under her a servant girl, a dirty, slatternly, enduring drudge. There was also a stout errand-boy, who swept out the shop, took down and put up the shutters, carried parcels, cleaned knives, and as cordially hated both his master and Miss Broadfoot, but would, as he said, "go through fire and water for pretty Miss Millicent." Such was the Jarvis household.

Hetty Langdale sat knitting in the window of her neat little parlour, in a plain morning dress of blue printed cotton. Her dark-brown hair was simply banded across and fastened behind her well-shaped ears with a brown band, while her full back hair was wound in the single large knot which we see in the unchanging fashion of the classic sculptures of ancient Greece. There was a quiet, placid smile on her tranquil features as she recalled the occurrences of the overnight.

Her widowed mother sat in an arm chair hard by, plying her needle, and ever and anon reviving the conversation by some cheerful remark.

There was a ring at the bell of the outer gate.

"Bless me," said old Mrs. Langdale, who was not in view of the entrance, "the milk boy and the baker have been, and the postman has gone by, look who it is, Hetty?"

Hetty Langdale did look, and a warm tinge rose to her cheek and forehead.

"It is Jonathan—Mister Brinsley—and he has a parcel in his hand. I'll go to my room, mother, if you please—"

"Nonsense, Hetty, don't be so silly. I'll go and let him in. Dear me, one would think he had proposed and sworn you to keep it a secret from me—"

"Indeed, dear mother—"

"There, don't say any more, but mind your knitting, Hetty. I can talk to Jonathan, and hear what's his business."

And off went the old lady and let in the visitor.

Hetty was not a little puzzled, however, at their proceedings.

After a few words on the doormat, Mrs. Langdale ushered Jonathan Brinsley into the cold, fireless, best parlour, opposite to the one in which she sat, for theirs was a double cottage.

What could be the mystery?

But Hetty was not at a loss to guess. It was the first time Jonathan Brinsley had called, except on business affairs with her brother Edward Langdale, whereupon he certainly never entered into discussion with the womankind. She had not long to wait for a solution.

Old Mrs. Langdale entered with a look of assumed gravity, and Jonathan Brinsley followed with an embarrassed face.

"Hetty, dear, pray be seated. Mr. Brinsley, may I take the liberty of calling you Jonathan?"

Mr. Brinsley bowed.

"Hetty dear, I am sure you have reason to be proud of your good fortune in securing such a lover as Mr. Jonathan here. It's no use in these matters venting about the bush, and as he's asked me to be his spokesman, I'll speak plainly at once."

"But my brother?" falteringly interposed Hetty.

"Oh, I've not come here, dear Hetty," said Jonathan, "without securing the breadwinner's consent—no, no! I met brother Edward this morning, an hour ago, in the market-place, and made no secret that your happiness would be mine, if there was no previous promise to another. So Edward and I shook hands, Hetty, and he wished me success; so that it now rests with you."

Mrs. Langdale was for the moment silent. Her eyes were filled with tears of joy, and she momentarily covered her face with her handkerchief.

Jonathan Brinsley made three steps with a firm tread towards the window where stood Hetty, who had risen on his entrance, and the next, Mrs. Langdale saw of her future son-in-law and her daughter was, that Hetty's head was hidden in Jonathan's broad bosom, and that Jonathan was kissing the full brown hair, with an emotion too full for fine speeches.

A calm conversation ensued.

Jonathan explained his prospects, and announced his intention of taking a proffered situation in Manchester, in the house of a paper maker, where he would, beginning at a moderate salary, in a very few years rise to an income ample for a couple of moderate wants, and when able to support a wife and marriage responsibilities, he would return to claim her promise.

He then presented his Valentine's gift—a handsome, solid and substantial rosewood workbox, fully fitted with silks, cotton, and silver-mounted implements, inlaid with brass and mother-of-pearl, having within its lid a letter inscribed:

"From Jonathan to his Valentine, Esther Langdale, February 14th, 18—"

Edward Langdale now came in, bringing with him a pound cake and a bottle of the best port the cellar of the "Vernon Arms" could produce.

This, carefully decanted and poured out, certainly improved the flow of conversation, and when Edward Langdale insisted upon Jonathan Brinsley staying dinner, which he consented to with some reluctance, on the score of inconvenience to Mrs. Langdale, his objections were silenced by his being told that he must wait till Hetty—who had slipped out of the room—came back.

That, however, was an event considerably delayed, as Hetty had betaken herself to the market place, where, having made some dainty but prudent purchases, she had slipped in unobserved the back way, and was now, with the assistance of a neighbour, superintending the important operation of preparing a good dinner.

* * * * *

There is a humble cottage in Daisybourne hard by the old church.

It has but one floor, and only three rooms, but its walls within and without are white as the driven snow.

The swallow nests under its broad thatched eaves, and the diamond-paned casements were clustered with sweet clematis and the wild honeysuckle. There dwells old Simon Westrup, gravedigger and jobbing gardener, and there too dwells Dolly, his orphaned grandchild, the prop of the old man's age, and his chiefest joy.

If Dolly was up betimes that morn of St. Valentine to milk the vicar's cow, Robin Armstrong was up earlier, for scarcely had the eastern sky changed from dull grey to the first saffron streak, when Dolly, awakening from the soundest of sleeps, fancied that there was a tap at the window; a conjecture which was changed into certainty when a low whistle was heard, anon rising into the merry trill of the soaring lark, then changing into the sweet notes of the thrush, linnet, and blackbird, and imitating the song of each feathered chorister with a truth and character that might have excited the envy of Herr Von Took, or the most renowned German siffler.

Dolly's discriminating ear told her, without any ornithological science, that such mixed whistlings of birds of all seasons were due to an unfeathered biped, and that the performer was no other than Robin Armstrong. So she quickly rose and twirled the pin of the easement, and as quickly did her Valentine deposit on the sill his bunch of

Violets, blue violets, beautiful blue violets,
Breathing all with odour, and dripping all
with dew.

With them was a square sheet of paper, whereon

was gummed a dried violet, and beneath was written in the fairest round hand of Master Solomon Birch, the schoolmaster's son, for-Robin did not think his own penmanship worthy of so important a task—

"Violet is for faithfulness,
Which in me shall abide,
Hoping likewise that from your heart,
You will not let it slide."

Dolly accepted the humble offering with glee, and closed the easement, and having spelt out the "motto," donned her best kirtle, took up her well-scrubbed milking pail, and sallied forth. A kiss from the honest Robin on her half pouting lips was administered, which was retorted by a playful slap on Robin's ear from Dolly's soft round hand. The young man, however, snatched her pail, and placing his light burden on his shoulder, off trudged the pair of lovers to the paddock, with hearts as light as the newly-wakened birds that chirruped their carols from every bough.

(To be continued.)

RIFLEWOMEN.

LADIES are taking to rifle shooting we learn. That a woman cannot fire without previously shutting her eyes will be universally conceded by every one who has the slightest knowledge of her sex, and hence the direction which may be taken by her ball will be wholly a matter of chance. The innocent boy who may be blithely stealing apples in a tree a hundred yards to the right of the target will be as likely to be hit as is the man who is standing by the rifle-woman's side, and the yells of those who are unexpectedly hit in painful places will be the only means of ascertaining whither the wandering bullets have sped. Of course, most persons will regard the space immediately in front of the target as the safest position, but even here they cannot be sure of immunity. The riflewoman may suddenly take it into her head to aim at the aforesaid boy in the apple tree, and thus hit the very centre of the bull's-eye. The simple truth is that there will be no such thing as safety within a radius of at least fifteen hundred yards of a woman with a rifle, and her path to and from the rifle ground will be strewn with the victims of accidental discharges.

LOVELINESS.—What constitutes true loveliness? Not the polished brow, the gaudy dress, nor the show and parade of fashionable life. A woman may have all the outward marks of beauty, and yet not possess a lovely character. It is the benevolent disposition, the kind act, and the Christian deportment. It is in the heart, where meekness, truth, affection, humility, are found, where we look for loveliness; nor do we look in vain. The woman who can soothe the aching heart, smooth the wrinkled brow, alleviate the anguish of the mind, and pour the balm of consolation in the wounded breast possesses, in an eminent degree, true loveliness of character.

HIS EVIL GENIUS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

WELL, driven as I was from the tribune by the Goths and Visigoths whom I have described, I had turned naturally to compose my ruffled feelings before my favourite "Salutations," when, as I entered the doorway, I started back so suddenly that I nearly overturned my mother, who was quietly following, head and ears well into her Murray, close behind me.

There stood straight opposite to me, in exactly, or nearly exactly the same rich dark dress and showy jewellery that I had seen her in before, that haughty-looking but beautiful lady whom the strange party had shown us that night in the professor's room.

I should have known her anywhere—I could have sworn to her, if I had met her in the thickest crowd in the world, say on a Derby-day, or all alone on the top of Mont Blanc—it was she and no other.

Her eye just caught mine with a glance of half astonishment and, as I for a moment thought, recognition, for she certainly made a sort of start, and then a flush and half-smile passed across her face as she turned away, pretending to be interested in one of those fine Guirlandajo's which hang on the wall opposite to the Albertinelli I have been describing.

My mother, who is sharp enough with her eyes, looked for a moment at the grandly-dressed lady, and then hard at me.

"Frank," she said, in a low voice, "do you know—where have you ever met that?"

She seemed to hang fire at the word "lady," and changed it to "person," which was always her epithet for any one, male or female, whom she doesn't happen to take a fancy to.

"Met that lady?" I replied. "Yes, mother, once before; and in a place and under circumstances I do not suppose I should ever forget, if I live to be a hundred; though don't ask me where, for you would not believe me, I know, if I were to tell you."

I had, I must tell you, once begun to relate that extraordinary interview and adventure at Dresden, but before I had even got half way into it, my mother had stopped me, and so completely shut me up, desiring me never even to allude to such a subject, that I had made up my mind never to mention it again in her presence, which determination I must of course have broken had I attempted to explain where and when I had before seen that dashing dame.

"I give you my honour that I never have exchanged a word with her in my life," I went on, as I saw an expression of distress and virtuous indignation rising on the maternal countenance; "but by Jove! I must confess that I should like of all things just to get an introduction to her, enough to be able to ask whether she really was actually in person in that room—well, never mind where, the night I did see her—"

"For shame, Frank! for shame!" to dare even to make such an avowal before your own mother's face, in regard to a creature who is notorious for her wickedness even in this very wicked, prodigal place."

"Well, mother, you certainly seem to know all about her at any rate."

And I turned round, before following my mother, who, full of indignation, had walked off in the opposite direction without another word, just to have at least one more peep at the naughty lady.

She had evidently been watching, probably had overheard and understood what had passed, for she seemed highly amused; and, in rather a marked manner, looking back into the further doorway, beckoned up somebody from within the next apartment.

An irresistible sort of presentiment made me stop, feeling perfectly certain that it would be the professor who would come in; I am sure that I would have bet a hundred, yes, a thousand to one that it was him.

When, in answer to the familiar summons, in walked—Gorles! yes, Gorles himself was the companion of that lady!

I do not think that I was at the moment so staggered, as if I had had time to think I should have expected to have been.

I suppose the fact is that I had been so astonished just before at encountering the lady, that my feelings had not had time to recover their equilibrium, or perhaps the two astonishments counteracted each other, on the principle of two affirmatives which make a negative, you know; or, at least, t'other way up, two negatives, which is it? Well, anyhow, it's all the same for the use of a comparison.

I rather wonder now that, weak and nervous as I still was from my illness, that I did not just out and run; I rather think that such was my first impulse, but pride prevented me.

I stood where I was, and stared at him, with my eyes wide open, fascinated, as a bird is said sometimes to be by a cat.

Gorles' attention was directed towards me by his gay companion.

As she took the catalogue of pictures out of his hand, I remarked that she said something to him in a low voice.

He gave a decided start, upon recognising me, as I saw he did at once, and then came hurrying across the room with his odious little hand stretched out.

I was not going to shake hands with the little brute—it wasn't likely—so I kept my fists deep down in my front pockets, making believe not to see his out-stretched hand.

He did not choose to notice my rebuff, for grinning at me with a fiendish malice, he shook me by the elbow; squeaking at the top of his horrid shrill voice:

"How d'y'e do, my dear fellow! I am so glad to see you, and to find that you are well enough to get about again after your serious illness, which I was so sorry to hear of. I had no idea that you were still in Florence; I should certainly have called to inquire after you, but meeting your people no longer at the hotel, I fancied you had all moved on somewhere. Your father and mother were so kind as to allow me to make their acquaintance; and that is how I know of your illness."

I only grunted at him, in reply to his obliging inquiries. I felt that I did not dare trust my voice to articulate even the simplest words.

I was longing to throttle him, and crush him under my feet; but I remembered what a warning I had received, and what the consequences would be if I were tempted to lay violent hands upon him.

I nodded my head, and mumbled something about having my mother waiting for me, and turned off on my heel to rejoin her.

But he wasn't going to let me escape him so easy as all that; and so I suppose it did not suit him to observe my repugnance, which must have been pretty obvious, too, for I made no attempt to conceal it.

"Bless me!" the horrid little monster went on in the coolest and most affable tone possible, "what a treat it is thus to run against an old friend and schoolfellow unexpectedly! how it calls up old times and bygone scenes, doesn't it? What a time it is since we have had the pleasure of seeing one another."

"Speak for yourself," I said, "if you please, as to such treats and pleasures. Schoolfellows we were, unfortunately; but there was not much friendship lost between us; and as to the time since we last met, it is not so very long ago that we were at Dresden."

"Ah," said he, "just the same, I see, as ever, Frank by name, and frank by nature, the old original Lombard still all over, rough, or I suppose I must say, plain-spoken, and ready as ever. But though we were at Dresden together, I am quite right all the same, for I said it was so long since we had seen anything of each other, going on for six or even seven years. Just think of that!—height ho! how time does whisk along!"

I felt my blood boiling up fast to bursting point, but I kept by fists well dug down into my trousers pockets, and I was determined that nothing should bring them out; besides, against such a pigmy, such an earwig!

I had no idea how really small he was, or how big I had myself grown, until I now looked down upon him as he stood close opposite to me.

I might have taken him up by the nape of his neck, and pitched him flying out of the window, or into the river; but as to striking or even kicking such a contemptible little beast, it was almost out of the question.

I don't think he can have had much idea of what was passing through my mind, for, assuming a would-be facetious tone, he actually poked with his forefinger at the lower button of my waistcoat, as he cried, as if suddenly recollecting himself:

"Dresden! Ha! ha! to be sure—true enough! I heard of you at Dresden the very night before I left that place, though I never saw you, you know."

"All the better for you, perhaps, that you didn't," I could not resist answering.

"Well, perhaps it was, considering where your letter was dated from that night; but that reminds me that leaving Dresden, as I was obliged to do that very next morning, I never heard how that escapade of yours with the police was settled. I was so glad to be able to be of use to you, as I hope I really was; and was much obliged to you for the cheque which was so promptly repaid in to my bankers in London. I should have written to have acknowledged it if I had known where; but I think, my dear fellow, you might as well have sent me one line to have let me know how the matter ended, if not to have thanked one for a favour."

"I did not consider that a favour," I replied, every moment getting more angry at the creature's bumpousness, "when it has been thrust upon one, not only entirely unasked for, but unwished for and unwelcome. It was deuced lucky for you that I could not find anyone else to lend me the money that same night in time to have met you with at the railway station the next morning on which you left. I would gladly have paid cent. per cent. to have been able to have paid you back at once, and if I had caught you at that time would have settled another score which I owed you, and then had every intention of paying to the full. You are safe from my revenge now, and you know why; and though no power shall induce me to touch you, let me tell you in the plainest English that you lie, like your particular friend the d—, the strange spirit. I tell you that you lie! The evening you allude to was not the last that you were at Dresden, as you know well enough, for it was at least a fortnight or three weeks later that we met there face to face. I saw you, and you saw me; so do not like a little liar as you are attempt to deny it."

The expression of intense astonishment, mingled with indignant innocence, which the little hypocrite

assumed, both in his countenance and voice, would have made his fortune as an actor, as he shook his head, and with a smile, or rather ghastly grin, said:

"I assure you, my dear fellow, I do not understand what you are talking about, or what you are driving at. Do you wish to quarrel with me?"

And, as if accidentally in the earnestness of his inquiry, though of course I knew well enough what his object was, he stuck his nose up at an angle in the most tempting manner exactly within reach of my fist, if I had only just drawn it out of my pocket; but there I kept it fixed tight, as if rooted like a tree in the earth.

"Quarrel with you!" I said; "no, thank you. As I have already told you, no provocation you may give shall induce me to touch you. I defy you to make me do so."

He bit his lips, and pretended to look puzzled; and then, after a pause, with an air of mock dignity just like a bantam cock going to crow, he made a sort of pirouette on his heels, and as he turned round I experienced an acute itching in my toe, which required an almost superhuman effort to control.

"At least, my dear fellow," he said, as he brought himself round on his pivot again, facing me.

"I am not your dear fellow," I cut him short, "and I beg that you will not call me so."

"Well then, my dear sir, or Mr. Lombard, if you prefer it. I do not at all understand your motives or your manner; but at least I think it due to myself to convince you that I am correct, and that you have been mistaken; for I can, as it happens, prove to you on the spot that I have not been at Dresden since the night which I have stated, in consequence of a particular event the exact date of which I happen to be able to speak to with accuracy."

"Though you do not seem anxious to renew our acquaintance, I should like, for my own credit's sake, since you have thought fit thus brusquely, to say the least of it, to impugn my veracity, to cause you to regret your hastiness, as I am sure you will before we part. If you will, therefore, allow me to introduce you to the lady whom I have had the honour to accompany to this gallery this morning, she will be able, as it fortunately happens, easily to corroborate the accuracy of my statement."

"The lady, pretending to be entirely occupied with a close scrutiny of the pictures, but, as I could see, all the while watching us out of the corner of her eye, had gradually come round the room close upon where we were standing."

Before I knew what he was at, the impudent little rascal was introducing me.

"Madame la Contessa di Sotto Nebia," he began, with an evident unction, as he elevated himself on his tip-toes, and mouthed out the fine-sounding title of the magnificent signora, "permettez-moi l'honneur de vous presenter mon ami, Monsieur Lombard."

Riled as I was with him, what could I do? I was obliged to bow, finding myself thus brought face to face with a lady, whoever she was, though entirely unprepared for this unsought-for introduction. I was accordingly in the actual performance of that usual ceremony of bringing my nose down to the regulation propinquity to my toes, when I found myself, if not roughly, very tightly seized by the arm, which nipping my gracefully commenced proclination in the bud, brought me upright again with a sudden and I am afraid, not very dignified exclamation of pain and surprise; and before I could recover my breath, or, I might say, wink my eyes, I found myself half-way down the corridor, marched off in the custody and under the firm and unrelenting grasp of an indignant and, as she fully believed herself, grossly outraged mother.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Not a single word passed between us as we descended the many flights of steps, and sternly pushing me into the carriage before herself, as though I should try to escape and bolt back to the dreadful syren from whose thralls she had so boldly rescued me, and in the same spirit of grave precaution—even pulling up all the glasses and lowering the blinds—I was conducted, with all the solemnity of a state prisoner, and in perfect silence, back to our apartments.

But bless the dear lady! when she had got me safe home, and had actually ordered me to go up to my own room, and there pray on my bended knees for forgiveness and repentance, it was, I thought, coming it a little too strong.

"Come, mother dear," I said, attempting to pacify her, a joke is a joke, but this is downright absurd and ridiculous."

Then didn't she just about pitch into me.

It was almost more than I could stand, but I tried my best not to lose my temper, but to laugh it off and to turn the whole matter into a joke. I thought at the time it was the best way; but as bad luck would have it, it proved instead of the best to be the very worst line I could possibly have hit upon.

I ought not to have answered at all; it was wrong of me, I know, particularly in the light and chaffing tone I did, though it was most ridiculous, you know; still it was not dutiful of me thus now to allude to it. Indeed, I should not do so to any one else; but having already told you so much, and so many regular details of the secret feelings and motives of my life, I don't mind you as I should another person. The fact is, it does me good somehow thus to make a clean breast of it; so I tell it all straight on just as it comes, good and bad.

I don't want to make myself out any better than I really am, and if you think the worse of me—why there, I can't help it. I am one of those who think that women ought always to be spoken to and spoken of respectfully and tenderly.

They ought to be treated by us men, of whatever rank in life or age we may be, with the greatest consideration for their weaknesses; for any one who has had anything to do with the gentler sex, in the shape of female relations, and most men have in some shape or other, you know. Even if not blessed with sisters or cousins, let alone wives, all of us, or at least almost all of us, must have had a mother of some sort, and at some time or another, I suppose; and so everybody, I may say, as a general rule must have had more or less opportunities of observing what very queer animals womankind in many of their ways are—charming, affectionate, long-suffering, and all the rest of it, no doubt, as the poet—what's his name?—has so beautifully described them:

Oh woman! in our hours of ease

While things go straight, not hard to please;

But when the other way they go,

The very deuce it is, you know.

Which you will find to be true enough, if you only happen, by any bad luck, to set going their prejudices or suspicions of propriety and virtue in regard to any other of their own sex.

Let them only take a notion of that sort into their heads, and then, oh deliver us! nothing short of hydraulic pressure will ever smooth things down again. Steam power is a joke to the force and resistance of their awful obstinacy in such cases; even the gentlest, the weakest, the most confiding of their species will become transformed into the most obstinate, irrational, unjust, bitter, aggravating, unconquitable creatures, in every respect exactly the opposite to one's own beau ideal, or what poets and other polite writers have described them to be.

There, then, was my dear mother, who was naturally the kindest, the softest-hearted, the most charitable of beings, having taken up that absurd prejudice, as far as I was concerned, but as I in vain tried to convince her, perfectly unfounded, abusing me worse than a pickpocket: there was no crime in the calendar which, in her bitter and unjust indignation, she stuck at imputing to me. And what is more, she not only laid every sort of iniquity to my charge, but fully believed it too.

That was what made me so angry. May I be forgiven! I have often been sorry for that day since; for though the provocation was sore, I ought, I know, to have remembered how kind, how good she had been to me from my childhood up, through all my school and college days, many and many a time standing between me and my poor father's just wrath when I had been getting into some of my usual scrapes and troubles, often, I know, denying herself so as to be able to assist me when run short, as I so often was; but at the time it seemed all the harder that she, whom I could not remember up to that unlucky day ever having spoken a harsh word, or given me an angry look, should be now prepared to consider me her only son in the light of a scoundrel, liar, and debauched profligate, and in short everything infamous (though perhaps not conveyed in quite such plain English) that her distorted imagination could suggest as most hopelessly evil.

There was no use in even attempting to reason with her; she would not listen to or believe one syllable I had to say, as she herself told me in so many words.

As far as I could make out, she must have seen that grand lady for some time previously going about the place at the Cascini, I suppose; or somewhere and from someone, that gossip, Zanzani, very likely, heard some startling particulars. I fear not altogether to that said lady's credit or renown.

Indeed, there was no doubt that she was infamous, glorying and loudly ostentatious in her public shame;

and having covered with every possible disgrace some two, three, or even four husbands, all living, was reported to have ruined some dozen or two reckless youths into the bargain.

And it was for such a creature that I had actually left her, my own mother's side, or what was the same, lingered purposely behind, in a public place, openly to renew my acquaintance with her.

Again and again I protested that so far from renewing or even seeking an acquaintance, I had never exchanged a single word with the wicked lady in my life; that, as I have just told you now, the introduction was unexpected, and entirely unsought for on my part.

I might have talked on for a week, or till now; I should never have persuaded my mother to listen to simpler reason.

"Don't tell me such nonsense," was all the rejoinder I received; "and add to your insult towards myself and to your already grievous sin, by falsehood and injury, sir. You seem to forget that you yourself told me that you had lately met the 'person' somewhere else, and even that you had something particular to say to her."

"If so," I replied, "what need could I have to be introduced to her, then, as a perfect stranger, as you yourself came back just in time to see? That must prove to you, dear mother, if you will only consider fairly for one moment, that there was no previous acquaintance between us."

"Oh, I cannot pretend to explain all your in-and-out motives, and wheels within wheels, as I have no doubt there are. I do not even wish to try to understand them; but do not suppose that I am to be deceived by such shallow devices."

"But surely, mother," I said, earnestly, "you will believe my solemn word of honour—"

"Wheels within wheels," was all she would reply. "You would not even allow me to explain under what circumstances I fancied I had once before met, that is, seen that lady, although I again repeat that I have never exchanged even a single word with her."

"Wheels within wheels. Now, at last, I understand for whom that lock of hair of yours was wanted—"

It was, indeed, really more than I could bear; I was afraid of entirely losing all control over my temper. I felt that the only thing I could do was to get away or to escape, before I should be driven to say something which I ought not.

Snatching up my hat, I was making for the door, when my mother, who by this time had worked herself into such a state as I had never seen her, or, at that time, any other woman in before—a sort of hysterical frenzy, sprung from her chair so as to get between me and the door, crying out:

"You shall not go; you shall not leave me. You are going to see her now, you know you are. You have made an appointment with that dreadful creature for this evening, I know you have!"

She made a convulsive clutch at me, as I stepped back perfectly agitated and bewildered with my struggling feelings of stifled anger and astonishment, and actually tore away a great piece out of my cambric skirt front in her hand.

I was aghast, I say, and scarcely knowing what I did, my prominent idea though was, I fancy, that of escape from my own now over-boiling temper, my mother's maid, I suppose, hearing her scream out, opened the door on the other side of the room; I belted round the table, and so slipped out through the bedroom and down the stairs, into the open street, but not before I had heard a wild cry—a threat so dreadful—well, never mind—it was totally unlike and foreign to her own kind loving self—but, strange to say, it did not affect me at the moment so much as it has since, when it has again and again recurred to my mind most bitterly.

We have, of course, long since been reconciled, and might seem to any common observers all that a fond mother and a dutiful son should be to one another; but from the day of that unhappy misunderstanding there has always been between us a silence on that subject—an estrangement.

We have never since been quite the same as we had been up to that time; and to all that misery and misfortune am I not entirely indebted to the baneful influence of that wretched Gores?—so far I will allow, as often as before, quite accidentally, and even without his own cognisance, acting upon my destiny. If I had not met him and that accursed countess of his in the gallery that day, that dreadful scene, that painful estrangement, founded on an unjust suspicion on my mother's part, would never have come to pass.

"Unlucky chance, do you say? Don't tell me of chances!"

(To be Continued.)

SCIENCE.

INVESTIGATING THE SUN.—Professor Balfour Stewart expresses the opinion that if astronomers have learned to be independent of total eclipses, as far as the lower portions of the solar atmosphere are concerned, it must be confessed that as yet the upper portions—the out-works of the sun—can only be successfully approached and investigated on these rare occasions. Regarding the solar corona, Professor Stewart remarks that we are in possession of definite information—that is, we are now absolutely certain, he thinks, that a large part of this appendage unmistakably belongs to our luminary, and, in the next place, it is certain that it consists, in part at least, of an ignited gas giving a peculiar spectrum which as yet it has been impossible to identify with that of any known element, though the temptation is great to associate this spectrum with the presence of something lighter than hydrogen, of the nature of which so little is understood. Several new metals have also been added to the list of those previously detected in the solar atmosphere, among the most important of these being the vapours of hydrogen, potassium, sodium, rubidium, barium, strontium, calcium, magnesium, aluminium, iron, copper, zinc, lead, nickel, cobalt, cadmium, manganese &c.

EXPLOSIVENESS OF FROZEN NITRO-GLYCERINE.—Mr. Beckerheim, of the Vienna Academy, has proved by experiment that frozen nitro-glycerine was more difficult to explode than the liquid. A block of wrought iron in falling 2½ feet exploded the liquid, while the same block required to fall 7 feet to act upon the ice. The specific gravity of the frozen nitro-glycerine is given as 1.539, and of the liquid at 1.580.

SEVERAL vessels in the navy are being fitted with hollow shafts made of compressed steel. The shafts are about 3in. thick, and do not weigh so much as the solid forged iron shafts which are at present employed in much smaller vessels.

WHY SILKS BREAK AT THE FOLDS.—Formerly the silk manufacturers used ungummed silk both for warp and weft. The ungumming softens the silk, and removes from it a resinous matter, but there is a great loss of weight: in French silks 25 per cent., but in Chinese silks sometimes 40 per cent. The manufacturers have, for some time past, ungummed merely the silk for the warp, leaving that for the weft raw, as the threads of the warp are not seen. In this manner a great loss of weight is avoided; but the goods, as soon as wetted, become uneven. This happens especially where such tissues are dyed, when the weft is attacked by the colour and the mordant, and becomes rough and broken. Like all other fibers, that of silk consists of a number of small particles linked together. These become prominent on ungumming; so that when a silk fabric, consisting entirely of ungummed silk, is moistened, no alteration appears. But in common silk goods this only happens with the warp. The moistening, finishing, etc., of these goods occasions a difference between the threads of the warp and of the weft. This explains the distortion of such goods, and their tendency to break in the folds.

WHY SHE FORSOOK HIM;

OR,

THE SECRET OF HER BIRTH.

By the Author of "Basil Rivington's Romance,"

"That Young Person, etc."

CHAPTER XIX.

TWO FOOLISH YOUNG PEOPLE.

It must not be supposed that Mr. Stone had been inactive since he received the honour of Lady Yorke's visit.

On the contrary he had been very busy. He had received many a confidence, given much advice, and gained a great deal of money, and his profession occupied so much of his time that he had almost ceased to think of his former ward, her unclaimed relationship to Sir Roland Yorke, and whether that relationship would ever become public.

Very few things had given him greater pleasure than the vengeance he was able to wreak on Mr. Jenkins for that gentleman's slight of his daughter.

Very soon after the return of the happy pair from their honeymoon, Jane, anxious to display her new possessions, wrote over to Hibernia Terrace, inviting the whole Stone family to spend an evening with her at Hornsey.

Mrs. Stone, who longed to economise the railway fare, was desirous of refusing.

Phyllis, who felt dimly that she had lost her girlhood's friend, and that she could have little in common with the self-satisfied, patronising Mrs. Jenkins who had risen in her stead, was simply indifferent, but the father of the family for once took the decision into his own head, and decided they were to go. He himself would follow to fetch them home.

Mrs. Stone, with pursed up lips, formal politeness, and a secret desire to find fault with everything, had hard work to smile in return to Jane's rapturous greeting.

As to Phyllis, she could hardly believe the alteration that three weeks' matrimony had wrought in her old companion.

Jane ordered, scolded, and displayed her servants as though she had never known what it was to have but one little workhouse maid as sole retainer. Not one trace of the old melancholy remained.

Mrs. Cornelius Jenkins evidently believed the world to be a charming place, and herself a very happy woman.

She rather paraded this happiness, certainly, as though she wished fully to impress upon Phyllis all she had lost by not gaining the affection of Mr. Jenkins; still she was hospitably inclined, and really wished to amuse her guests, or, as Phyllis afterwards expressed it:

"Jane meant to be very kind, only she was so astonished at the change in her circumstances, that she wanted us to be astonished too, so as to make sure that it was true!"

Tea was at six, and bore very little resemblance to that meal as Miss Jane Lambley had been wont to partake of it at No. 27, Hibernia Terrace. Of course they talked of Walworth.

Mrs. Jenkins was good enough to say she had had some happy days there, but "Hornsey was infinitely more genteel."

At this Mrs. Stone looked thunder, and Phyllis fearing a storm, hastily asked the bride if she had seen her mother lately.

"Mamma will come and see us when the days grow longer," was the suave reply, "it is too far for her in the winter."

"Will she remain at Walworth?"

"Certainly!" spoke the tallow manufacturer, decidedly. "Jane and myself are both convinced—hem—that Walworth is exactly suited to our dear parent's requirements!"

Mrs. Stone, who had a habit of staring when anything was said unpleasant to her, stared so very hard at this, that Mrs. Jenkins deemed it advisable to raise the séance, and the party adjourned to the drawing-room, where it was presently enlarged by the addition of several neighbours, who had been invited to "cards and supper."

Cards began, whilst for the old ones, and a round game for the others.

Jane managed her guests admirably; she presented Mrs. Stone and Phyllis to one or two elderly ladies, but quite forgot to introduce them to young Mr. Hawtree, who was quite the lion of Hornsey tea-parties.

But young Mr. Hawtree speedily discovered who was the prettiest girl present, and being well acquainted with all the local beauties, opined she came from a distance, consequently artfully pretended to believe she was of Mrs. Jenkins's family, and begged of his hostess to present him to her sister. Jane was not best pleased.

She explained that the young lady was not her sister, but an old school friend. However, Mr. Hawtree still looked his request, and so she was obliged to comply with it.

Room was made for the gentleman at the round table, and Miss Stone accepted him as her partner at speculation.

Mr. Hawtree made himself very agreeable, and the spice of coquetry in her nature rendered Phyllis very gracious.

She was not sorry to show Mr. Jenkins and his wife that other people could appreciate her attractions.

Presently cards were laid aside. People gave themselves up to careless chat in expectation of supper.

A great outcry arose at the non-appearance of Mr. Stone.

"So very strange," began the tallow manufacturer, "he used to be the soul of punctuality."

"How will you get home, Phyllis, if anything should prevent Mr. Stone from coming?" asked Mrs. Jenkins, drawing near her old friend, who was talking to Mr. Hawtree.

"Papa is sure to come," said Miss Stone, with conviction.

"But if he should not?"

"Why, then we must do without him. Mamma and I will protect each other. There are no such dreadful difficulties to overcome, I hope?"

"It is so unpleasant for ladies to go alone in an omnibus, especially late at night!"

"I have never found any inconvenience from it."

"A lady commands respect everywhere," said Mr. Hawtree, shortly.

He did not admire his hostess particularly.

"But Walworth is such a noisy neighbourhood."

"Is it?" asked Phyllis, who could not refrain from a slight feeling of indignation. "Why I have heard you complain of its quietness, Jane, when you lived there?"

Mrs. Jenkins looked unutterable things. She retreated, leaving Phyllis mistress of the field.

"Strange person, very," was Mr. Hawtree's comment. "Where did Jenkins pick her up?"

"Don't talk of her like that," said Phyllis, who had enough of the old friendship left, not to care to hear Jane blamed by others, though she saw her ridiculousness very clearly herself. "I have known her all my life, and we used to be great friends."

"Are you not now?"

"She is married, and has other ties."

Mr. Hawtree could make no reply, for at that moment the door was thrown open, and Mr. Stone entered, closely followed by a poorly-dressed woman, who stared about her as though surprised by the charms of the tallow manufacturer's drawing-room, and the sight of his guests.

"Jenkins," cried the confidential agent, shaking his friend warmly by the hand, "a thousand apologies for being so late, but I think I have brought my welcome with me!"

"Your welcome!" cried Jane, who had approached and was looking at Mr. Stone's companion with anything but approbation. "Surely you did not doubt that?"

"In short," said the confidential agent, who was perfectly aware that all eyes were on him, and the whole assembly hung upon his words, "I have the great pleasure, Jenkins, of restoring you to your sister. This estimable lady"—pointing to Mrs. Smith—"has been for some time making inquiries for her brother, whom she had lost sight of since he left the family nest at Eston, more than thirty years ago. Her heart has been wracked with anxiety as to his fate. It has been my happiness to become the humble instrument of her reunion with her long lost relative. Ladies and gentlemen"—turning to the company—"I am sure you will rejoice with me at this most happy and unexpected family meeting!"

Mr. Jenkins was on the point of uttering an indignant denial of all contained in this speech.

Jane was ready to faint. Before either could accomplish their intention, Mrs. Smith had thrown herself into her brother's arms, crying:

"Sure, and it's my own long Corny, only you've grown a sight handsomer!"

Not even this compliment could conciliate Mr. Jenkins, particularly as he observed many of the guests smiling at Mrs. Smith's peculiar English.

"Really the woman must be mad!" he began, pompously.

"Mad!" cried Mrs. Smith, indignantly. "Has the creature the heart to call me mad? Ain't it enough he's neglected his kith and kin for thirty years, but he must insult the first of 'em as he sees? Much good may his riches do him, and his his wife, too!"

And she darted a look of hatred on Jane.

"Really," commenced Mr. Hawtree, turning to his nearest neighbours, "I think we should wish our host good night after this sweet addition to his family circle! He can hardly wish for our society!" And Mr. Hawtree being decidedly the fashion at Hornsey, and people deeming his example a very good one to follow, there was a general departure. The ladies went upstairs to seek their wraps, carefully gathering up their dresses to avoid the contact of Mrs. Smith's draggled skirt, as they passed her. Jane went too, half beside herself with fury and disappointment.

She hardly knew whether to burst into invectives against her guests, or to humbly apologise. She adopted a middle course.

"I am quite sure words on my part are needless. Anyone can see how utterly unfounded is this mad woman's story. Such deceptions are constantly practised, even in the best families!"

"The best families, Mrs. Jenkins," returned a little maiden lady, who had had secret designs on the tallow manufacturer, and therefore hated his wife, "do not forsake their relations for thirty years!"

"Mr. Jenkins never denied the relationship!"

muttered someone else. "Poor creature! to see her affectionate greeting so repulsed!"

Evidently the Hornsey opinion was dead against the Jenkins'.

The mystery as to Mr. J's origin and family had puzzled so many people, that they were too glad to see it solved.

Phyllis and Mrs. Stone alone kept silent, and as soon as they had their things both went down, one too full of triumph for words, the other sorry that her first friendship should have such an end, and anxious almost beyond expression, that there should be no talk between her and Jane, so that they might both drift silently apart, without the memory of angry words or accusations between them.

Mr. Stone was waiting for them in the hall, and they left at once.

It was almost a silent journey home, but when they were in the little house in Hibernia Terrace, the father kissed his daughter, and said, proudly:

"There, Phyllis, we've paid him out, now."

"I wish you hadn't, father," said the girl, wearily, "I did not mind his marrying Jane. They might have been happy together. Now they will hate each other!"

It was characteristic of Phyllis that the next day she went over to Mrs. Lambley's, and told her that:

"Father had offended Mr. Jenkins, and she and Jane would probably not meet again."

The widow took the communication very calmly.

"My dear," she said, gently, "I don't think any of us will see much of Jane now. I was glad of this marriage, and I thought it'd be a good thing for her, but I don't deceive myself, and I know I've lost her more really than if she'd taken Lazarus, and gone with him to the South Sea Islands, where the poor fellow is starting next month, hoping to gain a livelihood by teaching the natives English. I hope he will get on there!"

"But she is your daughter," urged Phyllis.

"Surely she will not lose sight of you? If she does not like to come and see you here, you must go to her."

"I have my little whims, Phyllis, and it's quite possible they might prove an obstacle. Besides, my dear, I do very well here. I have Mr. Graham to protect me, and Johnson to wait on me. Take it altogether, I am as happy as most people."

"You are happier than I am!" burst forth her listener.

"Goodness, child! don't say such things. Who should be happy if you are not, with a father and mother to care for you, and young and pretty enough to turn all the men's heads?"

"I don't want to turn anyone's head, dear Mrs. Lambley, but I want a change. I am so tired of doing the same thing over and over again. Every week is just like the week before. We never go out. Fancy, Mrs. Lambley, I am nearly nineteen, and I was never twenty miles away from London in my life!"

"It will come in time, my dear."

"Well, I wish it would make haste then!" said Phyllis, impatiently.

And she had her wish. Something did happen, though it is doubtful if it was what she had chosen. Her father, waking up, perhaps, to the belief she was growing pale and thin, and went about without her old gaiety, determined to change his way of life.

What was the use of amassing riches for her if she was never to enjoy the use of them? He had a long and solemn consultation with his wife, Mrs. Stone loved money, but she loved her daughter better, so the result was that one December morning the agent said to Phyllis:

"How would you like to go away, child?"

"To go away!" exclaimed Phyllis, in surprise.

"What did you mean, father, for a day or a week?"

"For good!" he answered, firmly. "Your mother and I have been talking of you, Phyllis, and we think you are tired of Walworth."

"We are far from rich, child!" put in Elizabeth, with a half sigh, "still we've got but you, and anything's better than your going about half moped, as you've done lately."

"I don't want to leave Walworth, thank you, father. I should never like to live anywhere else!"

The parents gave a gentle sigh of relief. It would have cost them something to leave the little six-roomed house.

These two had grown so used to saving and pinching and scraping, that it had become their second nature, and it was for Phyllis's sake they did it, after all.

"Well, what is it you do want, child? What ails you? Aren't you well?"

"Oh, yes, I am well enough; I am a little dull, that's all."

"You need not to be dull," said her mother, in a tone of remonstrance.

"Just say what you'd like to do, Phyllis," said her father, kindly. "You know well enough we only want to please you."

"I should like to be rich," said the girl, abruptly, "not very rich; you know, like Mr. Jenkins"—she shuddered with disgust—"but comfortable. I should like to do as other people do—to have pretty things about me, and not to be always thinking of their price!"

"You are an extravagant puss for a poor man's child," said her father.

Then he went to his office, and apparently thought no more of the matter.

Still that morning's conversation bore good fruit. A week later Mr. Stone wrote a cheque, and sent Phyllis with her mother to a great furniture shop in the borough, and there was a great deal of choosing of chairs and tables and carpets, and all the things were sent down to Hibernia Terrace, and soon No. 9 showed a marked difference in its interior, for there were pretty, light papers on the walls, and the parlour owned chairs that really were easy and not merely called so by courtesy, and the piano was no longer the only piece of modern furniture in the dwelling.

Then the music pupils were abandoned, the great plate was taken away.

Miss Stone received a monthly allowance from her father, and her mother, who seemed to have acquired a wonderful amount of leisure and also patience for youthful frivolity, took her to spend a day at the Crystal Palace, where neither had ever been in their lives before.

And one or two of their richer neighbours seeing the changes at No. 9, actually called. So Phyllis's lot seemed brighter.

She had pretty things about her, all her time at her own disposal, and new acquaintances, ten times more sincere and more amusing than Jane Lambley had been, to supply the blank in her life, caused by that young lady's marriage.

Then, too, a great sensation was caused about Christmas time in the Hornsey circles, by the sudden disappearance of Mr. Hawtree from their festivities, and a report that this gentleman had been seen more than once on the top of a Camberwell omnibus.

The fact was, Mr. Hawtree had made a point of calling on Mr. Stone at the office (goodness knows how he discovered where it was), to express his obligation to that gentleman for unmasking the social impostor, Cornelius Jenkins; and Mr. Hawtree's gratitude was so overpowering, that he used to call regularly once a week, to relieve himself of it, until Mr. Stone, who was rather a sharp individual, saw how matters lay, and invited him to Walworth.

The little house was refurnished then, and there was nothing there to offend the young man's taste, even had it been more fastidious than it was. Mrs. Stone welcomed him cordially, her husband discussed the stocks with him, and the young ex-professor of music played and sang to him, listened to his little attempts at wit, and if she did not seem delighted at his attentions, at least did not refuse them.

The young man, who was not a bad fellow, although a little spoilt by the Hornsey ladies, fell madly in love with the fair-haired syren of Hibernia Terrace, and he soon became a frequent visitor at her father's, and the neighbours, who were far from backward in the art of gossiping, decided it was to be a match.

She was at Mrs. Lambley's in the early days of the new year—for she had not forsaken the lonely widow, although all acquaintance with her daughter had ceased—and Mrs. Lambley ventured to congratulate her on her new prospects. It was the first warning Phyllis had received of what people already spoke of as a fact.

"It is not true," she said, indignantly. "Mr. Hawtree is very nice; I like him very much, and he is often at our house, but I have no more intention of marrying him than you have; nor he me."

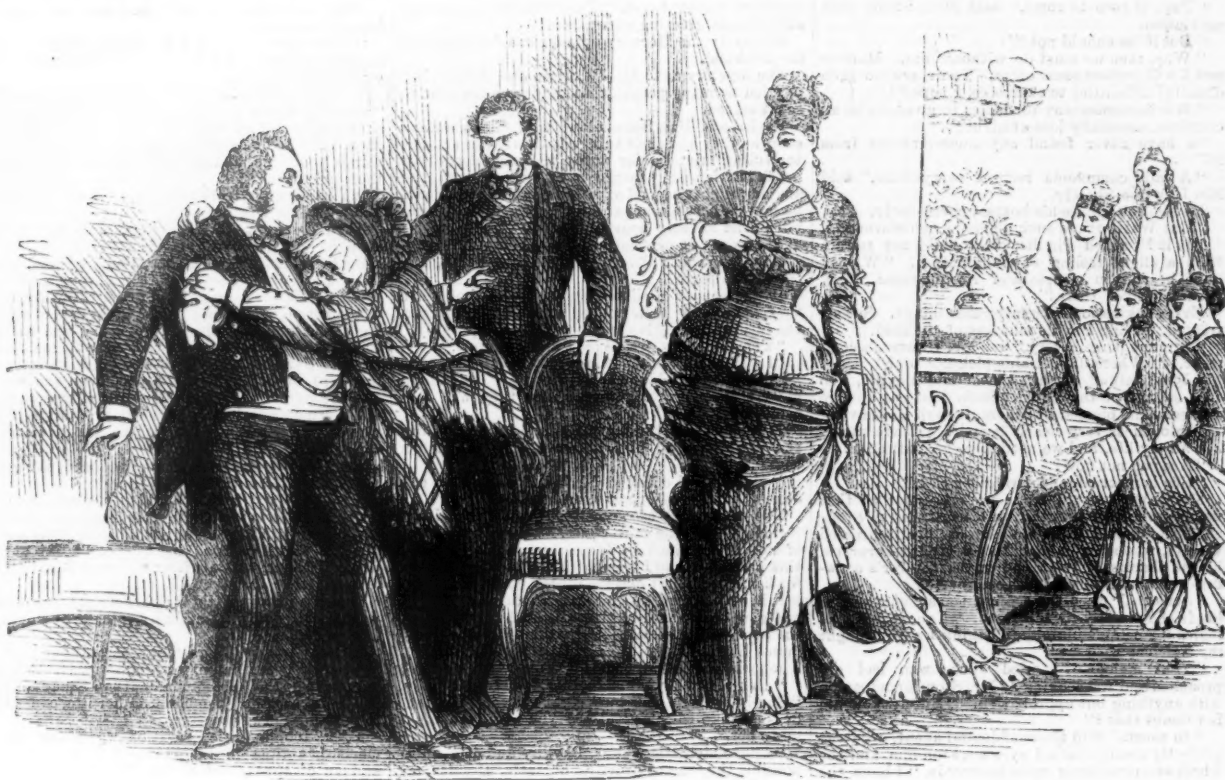
"Wait and see, my dear."

"I won't wait! I'll never see him again! People have no right to say such things about us, it isn't true!"

And she burst into tears.

Mrs. Langley did her best to soothe the grief which she did not in the least understand. To her it was so perfectly natural that strangers should settle a match before the two people chiefly concerned had made up their minds, she could not conceive what there was to cry about. Phyllis must hear the idea some time, as well first as last. Still she was kind-hearted, so she briskly changed the subject, and began to tell the girl a long story of her own youth.

Neither she nor Phyllis knew that some one had



[MR. JENKINS FINDS A LONG LOST RELATION.]

opened the door, and retired quickly on seeing the tears.

Miss Stone's eyes were quite dry when, half-an-hour afterwards, Mr. Graham entered. It was their first meeting since his return from Eston, where he had spent his Christmas.

He looked at her a little more closely than usual, and wished her a very happy New Year.

"I wish you a great many," said Phyllis, who seemed to have recovered all her composure. "I hope you found all your family quite well, Mr. Graham?"

"Never better," he answered, warmly. "There was quite a reunion of us; my two sisters were at home, so my mother had all her flock around her."

"Weren't you sorry to come back again?" was her next most inquisitive question.

"Oh, I was obliged to come; you know necessity has no law, besides, this is quite a second home to me. You have no idea how amazingly well Mrs. Lambley and I get on together, nor all the care she takes of me."

Jane's wedding had certainly improved Mr. Graham's comfort. He had always had a sort of liking for his landlady, his books and nick nacks scattered about the room, showed he was much at home.

Phyllis began to envy Mrs. Lambley.

"Is that a new album, Mrs. Lambley?" she asked, taking up one lying on the table, "do let me see it."

"It is not mine, Phyllis," answered the widow.

"But you are quite welcome to see it, Miss Stone," put in Graham. "And I will be your animated catalogue, and duly inform you who every one is."

He opened the book in front of her, and began to turn over the leaves, naming not only the original of the photographs, but adding a remark here and there, till she almost fancied she knew them. Evidently he was fond of his family, his careless manner disappeared here, and he showed all the feeling he generally hid beneath it.

At last they came to a portrait which he was passing in silence, but Phyllis exclaimed admiringly:

"Oh, how beautiful; I never saw any one half so lovely in all my life."

"The original is far more beautiful than the copy," said Graham, gravely.

"Is she your sister?" she said, eagerly.

"No."

She looked up quickly.

He understood she believed it to be the picture

of his future wife, she would not put her question into words, and he was too proud to volunteer a denial.

He made the matter worse by exclaiming: "But she is my sister's greatest friend, and my mother's too. She has been staying at Eston for three months. I expect there will be a general lamentation when she goes."

"What is her name?"

"Madeline Darnley."

"Not a pretty name."

"Tastes differ," he said, shortly. "I admire it!"

He walked home with Phyllis that night in perfect silence. She, poor little girl, was tormenting herself with thoughts of the wondrous attractions of Miss Madeline Darnley. He was wondering what had caused the tears he had surprised. He always told himself he never cared for Phyllis, yet somehow it grieved him to think of her being in any trouble.

"You have discarded your profession, Miss Stone," he said, noticing the disappearance of the brass plate.

"Yes, papa wished me to give up teaching."

"Good night."

He went straight back to Mrs. Lambley. He managed the good lady perfectly.

He always made her tell him whatever he wished to know, and arrested her eloquence when she got too profuse in her communications.

"What is the matter with Miss Stone?" he asked, abruptly.

"Why, nothing. Surely she did not tell you about it?"

"She told me nothing; but as I saw her here crying, and I am sure she has too much regard for her complexion to cry about nothing, I conclude there is something wrong. What is the mysterious 'it' you allude to?"

"Why, perhaps it is rather foolish of me; at any rate it was premature. I congratulated her!"

"What on?"

"Her engagement, of course!" with a profound pity for his stupidity.

"But is she engaged?"

"She will be. It is reported on the best authority Mr. Stone has refurbished his house from top to bottom. They have better servants, and Phyllis has ceased to give lessons."

"That proves nothing, except that her father is getting on in life, which is a good thing for him and his family."

"But Mr. Hawtree is always there. He dined with them on Christmas Day, and since that he has been there nearly every night."

"Who is Mr. Hawtree?"

"Oh, a very nice young man, so rich, quite a catch, and of course he means to marry her. Young men don't come tramping all the way from Hornsey to Waltham on winter nights unless there's something in it."

Without knowing in the least why, Mr. Graham was seized with a sudden animosity to Mr. Hawtree.

"Nothing of this had begun when I went away?" he said, crossly.

"No," said Mrs. Lambley, meekly, "but that's more than three weeks ago, and it's been going on ever since. The house has been refurnished a month!"

"Well, I don't see what Miss Stone had to cry about, even if you did hint that she was engaged to this paragon of a Hawtree!"

"Phyllis is a very strange girl. She owned that he was very nice, and that she liked him very much, and then she said nothing would come of it, and people had no right to talk about her, and she would never see him again. You should have seen her crying!"

"I did see her," returned Graham, who had not found it a very agreeable sight. "Well, what will be the end of it, Mrs. Lambley?"

"Oh, she will marry him, of course. All girls deny those things when they are asked."

"But they don't all cry about them."

"Well, Phyllis is a strange girl. She always was odd, quite from a child."

"Yes," muttered Graham, late that night, when he sat alone, "she is strange, she is odd. She has a simple, trusting nature. She could not understand why if people loved each other, they couldn't be happy in spite of all. She pitied a woman marrying for money. I loved her; I love her now, and I have waited too long! My stupid prudence has wrecked everything! I have lost her, and I know now that I would have given all I have, all I hope to be, just to have married her, and had her bright, dear face always with me. Heigh ho! why do we find out these things too late? That wretched Hawtree is some smiling simpleton, I suppose! Good women, somehow or other, always give themselves to men unable to appreciate them!"

(To be Continued)



[THE SCENE IN THE STUDY.]

THE GOLDEN BOWL.

By the Author of "Dan's Treasure," "Clytie Cranbourne," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IV.

DAVID BRISTOL.

At the study door Caroline Carew met Dr. Bristol. He was not her father's medical attendant, and she had from the first moment of their meeting, entertained an instinctive dislike and distrust of him, now, however, she was glad of his presence; it was some one outside the crowd of servants to whom she could appeal, and upon whose judgment she could rely.

"You have seen papa?" she said, looking into his face for some re-assurance; "what is the matter with him, the servants are intent upon frightening me."

"Yes, I have seen him, and can you bear the shock?"

"I can bear anything but suspense."

"He is dead."

"Dead!" repeated the girl. "I don't believe it," and before they could stop her, she had pushed open the door, and stood face to face with what but a few hours ago was her living father.

She did not faint or scream, though her face became, if possible, whiter than that of the corpse before her, and there was nothing in the first glance to frighten her, for, but for its awful stillness and silence, the figure still sat as it might have done in life.

Suddenly her eye fell on the empty decanter, and scarce thinking of what her words might imply, she pointed towards it and said:

"My father never drank all that wine."

"It wasn't like the master to do it," assented Garston.

"Have you examined him; is there no hope?" asked Carrie, herself going forward and taking her father's right hand in her own; the hand that still grasped the pen, and the fingers of which were ink stained, though only blotting paper lay before him, and not a line had been traced upon it.

All this Dr. Bristol and Garston noticed, but

Carrie started with terror as her warm hand came in contact with that of her father. For

"That hand was cold, a frozen thing,
It dropped from hers like lead,
She looked into the face above,
The face was of the dead."

No more was needed to convince her, she was indeed an orphan.

But she shed no tears, her grief was too agonising to find relief in weeping; dry eyed, white lipped, yet seemingly firm and collected, she allowed Mrs. Winstay to lead her back to her own room.

She would not return to bed, but sat stony eyed and silent, answering nothing, stunned by the terrible grief that had come over her, until the housekeeper grew frightened, and went off to seek Doctor Bristol to come and see her young lady before he left the court.

Despite her diabolical success, this could not be termed a lucky day for Hilda Kempson.

She had sent Milly from the room and was seeking sympathy from the doctor whose arm was round her waist, when Mrs. Winstay, forgetting ceremony in anxiety, came into the room, saying:

"Doctor, I want you to see my lady before you go, if you please," and then in disgust as she afterwards observed, "as if this were a time for love-making," she walked away without waiting for an answer.

"She must go soon, or else others will have to," she muttered to herself, as she returned to Carrie's room. "She'd disgrace a common kiddlywink, and how Sir John didn't find her out is more than I can tell. Pity she's come of such a good stock, for the shame to such a one is always the greater."

Half an hour later, Dr. Bristol's efforts, aided by those of the housekeeper, had failed to produce any effect upon Carrie.

There she sat; her hands clasped loosely on her lap, her eyes distended and staring blankly and wildly before her, until those by her side began to doubt for her reason and sanity, when suddenly upon the silence of the night came the boom of a great muffled bell.

Boom! boom! went the bell, and the girl started to her feet, galvanised, as it were.

"What is it?" she gasped.

"The last of the Carews has gone to join his kinsmen above," said Mrs. Winstay, solemnly. "It was a grand old race, but the male line of it has ended."

"Ended! Yes, the funeral bell is tolling for us," and Carrie sank on her knees, and the long pent up tears came to relieve her overstrained mind and feelings.

"Put her to bed, and keep her as quiet as you can," said Dr. Bristol to the housekeeper, and then he went off, declining the offer which the house steward made him of a bed at the Court, saying he had other patients to attend to, and starting for his six miles' ride in the dark alone.

But Dr. Bristol had something to think of, and he never thought so clearly and to so much purpose as in the saddle. True, he sometimes talked to his horse, but then his horse was prudent, and never repeated the remarks, and he was quite safe from the eavesdropping of any other creature.

An ambitious as well as a handsome man was David Bristol, a man not only of no family, but of no legitimate status in the world, since he was born in the workhouse, his mother dying at his birth, and giving no satisfactory account of his missing parent.

So they had called him Bristol, his mother naming that place as the last from which she came, and the nurse having a fancy for the name of David, these two were the Christian and surname bestowed upon him.

But where other boys would have become drudges and sunk like so much human cattle into the rack of life for the use and football of others, David Bristol asserted himself even from his pauper cradle as above the common herd, and as one to be served rather than to do the behest of others.

A beautiful child, with his imperious blue eyes, curly brown hair, and aristocratic looking face, he tyrannised over his nurses and small playmates through the early years of infancy, and later on, when his taskmasters were overwhelming, and rebellion seemed useless, he did as many a lad had done before him—ran away.

It is needless to speak of his sufferings and adventures, until footsore and weary to the extent of life seeming to have nothing left in it but the desire for sleep, he sank down on the doorstep of a closed shop, on the outskirts of the metropolis, and slept on dreamlessly and sweetly, as though in a feather bed, until morning.

Some kind fate must have guided him to this house, for from that doorstep he began a new career in life.

The shop was that of a surgeon and chemist, As

good luck would have it, the boy who ought to have taken down the shutters and swept out the shop had left suddenly only the night before, and the servant, looking about ruefully for some one to take his place temporarily, espied young David on the shop steps.

His pretty face, dirty as it was, pleased her and she engaged his services at once, giving him in reward for his work, a hearty breakfast, a good wash and sixpence.

But David had no desire to go further; Polly spoke a good word for him, some of the young master's clothes were picked up to make him look decent, and he was engaged as doctor's boy at the magnificent sum of five shillings a week.

Polly managed to provide him with lodgings at her sister-in-law's for one fifth of his weekly earnings.

Many a dinner, tea and supper did David get through Polly's friendship for him, until at last his bright face, quick apprehension, and obliging manners, won their natural reward, and he was taken in the house as assistant.

From that point his rise in life was rapid, he was a favourite with everybody, he entered at the colleges, walked the hospitals, and at eight and twenty had taken his diploma and was a partner in the same house, on the doorstep of which he had spent his first night in London.

His ambition soared beyond a poor tenth-rate suburban practice, but he had no connections, no money, and no friends beyond those whom his daily life brought him in contact with, and his restless longings seemed like so many waves dashing against an impervious wall, to be only flung back upon himself.

Besides the want of opportunity, there was another tie that bound him to the Blackwoods, a tie that he once sought for earnestly, but which now fretted him.

Doctors Blackwood, Blackwood and Bristol were the names on the door plate, and the practice, though a poor, was a pretty extensive one.

Old Doctor Blackwood spent most of his time at home, seeing a few of the wealthier patients, and leaving all the harder work to his son and David.

But there was another member of the family, the only daughter, Emma Blackwood, who for years had loved her father's handsome assistant, and to whose influence was principally due his medical education and partnership with her father and brother.

They had been engaged for five years, and were to have been married as soon as he had passed his last examinations and become duly qualified, but he made excuses, reasonably enough in their way.

He would like to do something out of the old beaten track; would like to surround his Emma with wealth and luxury.

The practice at Walworth was certainly not sufficient to support three, or even two houses, and Frank might marry at any time, and of course would bring home his wife to his father's house.

All of which was reasonable enough, and Emma assented, with a sigh perhaps, and put away tenderly the garments she had worked upon so long and carefully.

David, of course, knew best, and David's wish was her law, and though she was becoming conscious that her modest charms were already beginning to fade, she made no doubt of his truth and affection, and consoled herself with the belief that he would love her the same, even when her youth and the fairest days of her womanhood had passed away.

Neither was her belief to some extent unfounded. David Bristol loved Emma Blackwood, as he would never love another woman, but she did not satisfy his ambition.

Had he been a man of position, of wealth, or of renown and talent, he would have married Emma Blackwood, and found the purest happiness of life with her.

But having nothing in himself or of his own, he felt that to attain even a tithes of his ambition he must marry for it, though as yet not an heiress or a woman of position or family had come in his way.

He was resolving these things in his own mind one wretched December day, as he sat alone in his consulting room, and had almost decided to make the best of life as it came to him and ask Emma to fix the day for their marriage, when a sharp tug at the professional bell aroused him.

"Please, sir, there's a lady ill, and her husband dying, will you come at once?" and the speaker, evidently a hard working woman, whose arms had just emerged from the wash-tub, stood anxiously before him.

To do him justice David Bristol never questioned a suffering patient as to whether his bill would be

paid, or demanded a trifling fee before he would attend them; so after a question or two as to the nature of the case, he pulled on his thick overcoat, and went out into the cold street, on which the snow was just beginning to fall.

"Is it far?" he asked, shivering.

"No; only the next street, sir," replied the woman who had fetched him.

And together they walked on until his guide stopped at the door of a large house which was evidently let out in small tenements.

The woman opened the door with a latchkey, and led the way upstairs to the back room of the second floor, against the door of which she tapped.

"Here's the doctor, please."

"Take him away, we can't pay for a doctor," replied a woman's voice from within the room; "it's more than we can do to get bread."

"But the poor gentleman, he will die!" urged the woman; "and I've been out in the snow to fetch the doctor. I'll pay for him myself sooner than he shall see him."

"Open the door!" said Bristol, suspecting at once some mystery, and the woman at his side obeyed. It was a strange sight that met their eyes. Though the room was mean and badly furnished, it was clean, and even showed some evidence of taste and care, as the few antimacassars on the broken chairs and the general arrangement of everything in the room indicated.

The woman who had spoken and refused the aid of a doctor, was seated at a table writing, one small tallow candle giving her light, and an envelope, already addressed, lay by her side.

She looked up in some irritation as the doctor with his guide entered. Though she was too well bred to ostentatiously show it, on the contrary she rose to her feet, observing:

"We want a doctor, but we cannot pay you, at least at present," and she glanced at the letter she was writing.

"Let me know what is the matter?" he replied, glancing towards a dark corner of the room in which a bed with some human form reposing on it, was lying.

"It is my husband," replied the young woman, "he has been ill, very ill."

"I will look at him," and Dr. Bristol took up the solitary candle.

As he did so, his eye fell on the address written on the envelope lying on the table, and he read:

"SIR JOHN CAREW,
"Clovell Court,
"Devon."

Then he went to the bedside to look on the death-stricken face of the husband of Hilda Kempson.

CHAPTER V.

"A LADY TO SEE YOU, SIR."

A PALE sunken face, on which privation and disease had set its stamp, looked up at Dr. Bristol, as he held the candle over the miserable-looking bed.

The face of a young man about his own age, with fair yellow hair, pale blue eyes, and features that stood out prominently from the sunken cheeks.

"It's no use, doctor," he half whispered, his voice almost gone, "it's too late."

"This man has been starved," said David Bristol, turning sharply upon the woman whom he supposed to be the sufferer's wife.

"And so have I," was the reply.

"But have you no friends? no one to help you?" was the next question.

"I've rich relatives, if that's what you mean," replied the woman, bitterly, "but they threw me off when I married; this is 'the prose of love in a cottage,' and she glanced at the occupant of the miserable bed, at all her wretched surroundings, and laughed with a kind of mockery of her own woe that made her hearers shudder.

"Get some port wine, some beef tea, and make him a little gruel or arrowroot at once," David said to the woman who had brought him here, and he placed a sovereign in her hands, bidding her make haste as he would wait to see the result.

After all it was rather a case of starvation than of absolute disease; the woman too, though by no means so far gone, was evidently suffering from want, and having for the time relieved their necessities, he went back to his own comfortable home, the woman's bitter words, "this is the prose of love in a cottage," ringing in his ears.

The story she could tell him, and which he afterwards learnt, was plain enough.

An only child, the daughter of a younger son of one of the oldest families in England, having no for-

tune of her own, she had broken her father's heart, and estranged herself from her family, by marrying a man who professed to be an artist, but was in fact nothing.

There was a good deal of infatuation, it could not be called love, on both sides until poverty came in at the door, and they gradually sank to the position in which David Bristol found them.

Next day he was too busy to call, the one after that he went in early, and was shown up at once by the woman whom he had first seen.

The man was asleep on the bed, the woman sat with the table on one side of her, the fireplace on the other, and her feet just twisted round to rest on the fender.

But little change had taken place in herself or the room, since David Bristol's first visit; a breakfast of tea and toast stood untasted by her side, and an open letter in her hand, evidently but just received, had so absorbed her mind as to make her quite forget her meal.

A handsome face goes a long way, and David's as he came in now with a cheerful kindness expressed upon his, inspired the woman with trust and confidence such as she had not felt in any human being for a long time.

"He is asleep," she said, in a low tone; "but sit down, I want to talk to you," and she pointed to a chair.

"You have saved our lives," she said, after a second's pause, "and an hour ago I was anything but grateful to you for it; now it is different, life may still have some comfort in it for me. Will you read that and tell me what you think I ought to do?" and she handed him the letter she had been reading, and he noticed that in her left hand she held a cheque and a banknote.

The letter was headed, "Clovell Court, Devon," and dated the day previous. It began:

"MY DEAR HILDA.—I am shocked and distressed to hear of the poverty you are in. I enclose a cheque for fifty pounds, and a banknote for five pounds, in case for a day or two you cannot get out to change it. If, as you imply, your husband and you are not happy together, and you care to leave him, you will find a home with us at the Court; if, as I think it your duty, however, you decide to remain with the man you have married, you may rely upon receiving a similar cheque to the one enclosed, every quarter-day, from

"Your affectionate uncle,
"JOHN CAREW."

P.S.—I have not told Carrie of your letter, as it would grieve her, but she will always give you a welcome.

"A noble letter," said Bristol warmly, as he handed it back; "you will be saved from want in future."

"Yes, but you have not told me what I ought to do; go or remain?"

David Bristol shrugged his shoulders; a woman's unreasoning devotion and forgetfulness of self for a bad man; and a woman's intense and all absorbing selfishness, were alike extremes that he had met with in his professional career, but made no pretext of understanding. It was useless saying that one was an angel, the other a fiend, because both qualities were sometimes combined in one person.

This woman before him, for instance, had thrown away all the world for that man lying asleep on that miserable bed, and was now ready to throw him aside, to be able to grasp back again only part of what she had once been so prodigal.

"Tell me the truth," she said, in a still lower tone than she had before used; "will he live?"

"I have not examined him; but I should say with care, and the comforts you can now afford to get him—yes."

Again there was a pause.

"He has slept like that for hours."

"Yes, it will do him good; he will require great care, you had better hire a nurse; he ought to be watched night and day, and fed whenever he awakes. Shall I send you one?"

"No, I will nurse him myself, we cannot leave here at present, and what should I do with a woman in this room?"

"Perhaps they could let you have another in the same house."

"Yes, I never thought of that; will you look at him! His cough is frightful, all his family have died of consumption."

David Bristol looked at the patient, then at the wife; was the wish father to the thought? He scarcely wondered that it should be so.

What charm could this poor wreck of humanity have for a woman who, like this one, was so lacking in patience and sympathy?

"Has he taken anything?" he asked at last, bending down so that the sleeper's breath should come over his face.

"Only the medicine you sent round yesterday."

"Where is it?"

There was a momentary hesitation, then she went to a cupboard, in which, on a shelf, he saw many bottles, and produced the one he had sent his boy round with the previous day.

"You seem to have a great number of bottles there," he remarked, an odd suspicion crossing his mind. "Has any other doctor been attending you?"

"No, not lately. I suffer much from neuralgia; most of the bottles are empty except those filled with Herbert's chemicals."

"Don't keep the medicine with them, some mistake might be made; send round for me as soon as he wakes, I don't like his appearance; what has he eaten since I was here last?"

"Nothing solid—some beef tea and wine. Don't you think he will recover?"

"I don't know. I have two or three appointments or I would stay with him; but send round for me or my colleague directly he wakes."

"I will, thank you."

And then David Bristol went away to make his round of professional visits, most of them to the homes of the poor.

So many distressing cases came before his notice that day, that it was evening before he returned home, and Hilda Kempson and her sick husband had for the time passed out of his mind.

It was not indeed until nine o'clock at night that Frank Blackwood observed, as he sat by the fire, his meerschaum in his mouth.

"By the way I was called out to one of your cases to-day. Let me see, what was the name? Kempson, Little Mildred Street; the poor fellow is gone."

"What, dead?"

"Yes, starved to death; that should be the certificate; to spare the wife's feelings, you'll describe it as exhaustion, I suppose?"

"His lungs were affected, I was told; but really I only saw him awake once. Did you see him alive?"

"Yes, alive but not conscious. His wife seemed dreadfully cut up."

"Did she?"

And then the matter dropped; besides returning the sovereign he had given the woman to spend for her, and paying for his professional attendance, Hilda Kempson had probably passed out of David Bristol's life.

He was not quite satisfied with the explanation of her husband's death, but the man was so far gone when he was called in to see him, that he would not, if questioned, have felt justified in expressing his doubts, and these doubts after all were but vague ones.

A week later.

The shades of evening had closed in, the day had not been a busy one, and David Bristol and Emma Blackwood were standing before the fire in the back sitting-room which was sometimes used for the reception of patients, his arm round her waist, and she affectionately talking to him in the dim firelight, when the stupid servant, who had been standing at the open house door, put her head into the room, saying:

"A lady to see you, sir," and the next instant a dark-robed figure stood before them.

Instinctively, why she could not tell, Emma Blackwood shivered.

"Take her into the next room," said David, somewhat sternly; "there is no light here," and the servant, a trifle awed by the tone of his voice, obeyed.

"Who is it, dear?" asked Emma, nestling back into her place in his arms.

"I don't know, dear; a patient, I suppose; she won't keep me long," and with a kiss he left her.

"I must apologise for not having sent to you," observed the black-robed figure, lifting her heavy crape veil and disclosing the face, becomingly surrounded with a widow's cap, of Hilda Kempson.

"Not at all; I did not expect you to do so. I am sorry I was so much engaged on that dreadful day. I am happy to see you looking better, however. I suppose you will soon be going to Devonshire?"

"Yes, I start to-morrow. I come to thank you for your kindness, and to ask you to accept this," and she laid a closed envelope upon the table.

The doctor bowed his thanks.

"If it ever should be in my power to return by any act of kindness that shown towards me by yourself, it would give me great pleasure," she said, with some hesitation. "I suppose you are fixed in this place and would not care to leave it?"

"On the contrary, it is because I do not know where else to go, that I remain here," he returned, with an awkward laugh.

"And your wife; would she also like to leave here?"

"I have no wife," was the reply.

"Pray excuse me; I—I—I thought you were married. But to return to what we were talking of, I may help you in your profession if I can; may I not?"

"I shall be only too grateful for any help of the kind that any kind friend can give me," he replied, lightly; "and I sincerely hope that a bright and happy future will soon help to obliterate some of the pain you must lately have passed through."

"Yes, it has been an awful time," she assented, with a shiver, "but I am going to a lovely spot, which I hope you will one day see. There is my address; if I can be of service to you write to me, and whether you do or not, you will one day hear from me."

With which she rose, shook hands with him, and left the house.

The envelope contained a banknote for twenty pounds, and the donor's name and address: "Mrs. Kempson, at Sir John Carew's, Clovelly Court, Devon."

"This is a windfall, at any rate," said the young man, gaily; "as for her other promises they are worth—well, so much as comes from them."

Three months passed by, and Hilda Kempson, but for her generous present, would have been forgotten, when one morning a letter addressed to Dr. Bristol, and marked "private," was put into his hands. It was short, but to the purpose. The principal surgeon at Withbury, six miles from Clovelly, was retiring from practice; a physician taking his place and keeping a surgeon or assistant would have a much larger practice; a thousand pounds was required for it, but if the son of the present doctor were retained as surgeon and partner, five hundred pounds would be taken, and the writer added, that perhaps part of this could be lent for an indefinite period.

At the very time this letter arrived, a quarrel for the first time since they were boys together, had sprung up between Frank Blackwood and himself, and the question had already presented itself to his mind, should he throw Frank and his father overboard, and try to take their practice himself, or should he go away and leave them.

Hilda Kempson's letter settled the question. He had no intention of giving up Emma, but Emma must wait.

The consequence of all this was, that he took Mr. Farleigh's place, retaining his son as surgeon, and on this night, when Sir John Carew breathed his last, he is riding back from the Court to Withbury discussing the question in his mind, shall he throw over Emma Blackwood after her long years of waiting and become master of Clovelly Court, or shall he be true to his old love, and renounce the temptation before him? For Hilda Kempson has assured him that Clovelly must belong to her, and to do him justice, he has no suspicion of the foul manner in which she hopes to gain it.

Sir John was seventy-two; what more likely than that he should die suddenly. Caroline Carew—Hilda told him—knew she was not legitimate, therefore the Court must descend to her; and yet, though the temptation was great, the battle was not fought out during that solitary ride.

To refrain from marrying Emma Blackwood was one thing, to give her up, throw her aside, was another, and Hilda Kempson, with all she could offer him, seemed light when weighed in the balance against his first love.

He went to bed with the question still unsolved, and the morning's light found him as far from a decision as ever.

The contents of his letter-bag, however, settled it.

(To be Continued.)

SPARE HOURS FOR STUDY.

Who cannot pick up a little learning? There are some ignorant fellows who love to grow up in their ignorance, just because they are too lazy to learn anything. They plod along through life in a poor sort of way, and are always out at elbows, with nobody to pay them a great deal of respect.

The poverty of such fellows is their own fault. There is nobody in our country who need grow up a dunce. Even if a body has to work hard, he can study hard too in his spare time. Every boy has some spare time, but different boys spend their spare time in different ways. Some boys like to take their neighbours' gates off the hinges and hide them away; other boys spend their spare hours in teasing dogs and cats and robbing birds' nests; others make their spare hours a nuisance to everybody around them.

Andrew Johnson spent his spare hours in study. He did a great deal of his studying by the light of the wood-fire in the kitchen, being too poor to have candles. Think of that, young friend, you who

spend your evenings lounging under wasted lights. Elihu Burritt was poor and a blacksmith. He had no fancy for lounging or loafing, or teasing cats, or robbing birds' nests. He is now one of the most learned men in America, and understands two or three dozen languages.

Spend your time for the best, boys. Make the most of it for yourselves, for your country, and for Him.

BILLIARDS.

This is one of the most fascinating of games. It is also one of the most scientific. Of those which are played indoors it is certainly the most healthy, as it imposes a moderate amount of physical exertion upon its votaries. Yet there are people who regard it with the greatest horror, it being, in their eyes, associated with every description of iniquity. In their opinion, when a young man begins to handle a cue, he takes the first step towards destruction; and when he bolts with his master's cash-box they seem to imagine that he has merely concluded his career in a befitting fashion. They have plenty of cases to cite in support of their theories.

Somehow or other, it does appear that billiard-players, as a class, are rather a loose lot. If a young man drinks, or gets, or mixes in questionable society the chances are that he also plays billiards. At the same time, it is but right to state that billiards do not necessarily lead to the things mentioned, although the things mentioned do seem to lead to billiards in a general way. Then many an addle-pated young man has had the audacity to declare that he has been ruined through billiards; as if that statement were a partial excuse for the follies and vices of which he has been guilty. There may be little veracity in his allegation—probably the truth is that he has attempted to make his cue find him the funds wherewith to help pay for his expensive amusements, and, in doing so, fallen a victim to cleverer hawks than himself, but it has the effect of casting discredit upon the game. So, also, has the fact that the surroundings of billiards are anything but satisfactory.

A public billiard-room is invariably a stifling, ill-ventilated place, and frequented by individuals of anything but a pleasant type. Stale rakes, who, having been fleeced themselves, are longing to prey upon others, and cunning vagabonds of low origin and low tastes find their way to it; and they soon rub the gilt off the more innocent beings who come in immediate contact with them. He must be a very strong-natured man who can frequent a billiard-room of the worst kind and escape more or less contamination. If there is greed within him the place will bring it out, and in time he will learn to do things without hesitation which at the outset he performs with a sense of the deepest shame. He is taught by its influence to look after himself, and to care not a jot who else go to the bad; lessons which, though very valuable from one point of view, are not likely to conduce to his permanent benefit in the highest sense.

When all this can be written with truth—when it can be confidently stated that billiards are surrounded by a mass of vagabondage, knavery, dissipation, and other influences which tend to men's moral deterioration, and are calculated to place people in the greatest peril, we cannot be surprised that there are purists who hold up their hands in disgust and condemn the game altogether.

MR. RALPH STOTT has issued a bill stating that he intends to perform his feat of crossing from Dover to Calais and returning in sixty minutes on the 5th of March.

ANTIQUITY OF THE FAMILY.

The family institution was prior to every other social form. It is not a creation of government, or a product of legislation. It is not the offspring, but the parent, of states and of civil authorities; and it has been the wisdom of states in all ages to regard the family institution with reverence.

"The common law itself," says Lord Bacon, "which is the best bond of our wisdom, does often prefer the prerogative of the king."

Fathers were before kings, and the patriarchal staff before the sceptre of royalty, and the simple majesty of parental rule before the oldest thrones. Kingly and imperial sway are mere ephemera in comparison with the family.

The first rude domestic tent of palm leaves ever spread by the Euphrates was the emblem of power, more enduring and prevailing than that of the Caesars. No other human relation is comparable to that.

Whatever change may yet take place in earthly government, and whatever the form that shall ultimately prevail, the permanence of the family is assured to the end of time. The moral power of such an institution as the family cannot but be great.

Each one of the families in the country forms in itself a small society, efficiently organised, and compacted by ties of the most inviolable nature; and it is these organisations which are constantly occupied in the primary education of our future rulers in Church and State, from the lowest to the highest. How important, therefore, from this point of view, is the discreet and wise management of each and every one of this vast array of societies! The soil is theirs, the power is theirs—in a word, they are the nation.

MOURNING AS A FASHION.

THE habit of expressing the grief of a bereavement by outward signs, such as the colour of a dress, is one that we cannot find fault with. We think it is not only harmless, but appropriate. It tells to observers that there has been a death in the family without asking, and forbids the levity of conversation that might otherwise be indulged in with the bereaved.

Besides, the habit of mourning is universal among nations and peoples, and it would, probably, be impossible to abolish a custom that has its origin in some deep-seated instinct of human nature. But when mourning becomes a mere fashion, when the heart's grief comes to be measured by so many inches of black border to the veil to be worn before the world for a certain length of time, then the matter has degenerated into a wicked and flippant trifling with sorrow.

A bruised heart needs no sable weeds to express its anguish. The soul that really and deeply feels its loss when a beloved one that was its pride, its joy or support, has been snatched away, does not require sombre folds of crape and funeral stuff to make a decent and proper proclamation of its grief. There lies a shadow on the hearth, a mournful vacancy in the seats and places once occupied by the lost one, that does the work more thoroughly than all the devices and arts of the fashionable milliner and dressmaker. It matters little to the bereaved whether she be clad in a black suit of the latest fashion, or in her usual garments.

Respect for the world's opinion makes it advisable, perhaps, that a mourning habit be adopted, but the genuine grief will rest on the heart and glisten in the eye, and express itself in the bowed and humble form, whatever may be the cut or colour of the dress. The poor cannot always wear mourning, yet the poor feel their losses and mourn them no less than the rich.

Respect for the memory of the dead is a holy and pure feeling, always to be encouraged; but a conventional mourning, that varies with every whim of fashion, is a weak and wicked vanity.

RICHARD PEMBERTON;

—OR—

THE SELF-MADE JUDGE.

CHAPTER XXI.

With caution judge of probabilities.
Things deemed unlikely—often impossible
Experience often shows us to be true.

SHAKESPEARE.

It is dangerous to take anything for granted; Augusta had received several high probabilities as truths. In the first place, she had not considered it possible for Sister Mary to err in the smallest particular of her account of the O'Donovan family; and yet the sister was mistaken in supposing that the children of Ellen O'Donovan had been conveyed to the dead ward.

It is very true that Ellen had been taken to that place, and that in regard to the children such had been the first intention of the overseers, but their purpose had been changed upon further observation of the little patients, and they had been placed in the sick ward, when their disease soon took a favourable turn.

In the second place when hearing the report of the medical bulletin, that the dead ward was empty, Augusta had erred in coming to that very natural

conclusion, that each one who had been taken thither to die was dead and buried. It is true that all the occupants of the dead ward, save one, had died and were buried—but Ellen O'Donovan was that one. It is also true that she lay many hours as one dead, but she revived from that coma and gave signs of returning life and consciousness, and when her nurse knew that the dread crisis was passed, and that she would live, she was conveyed into the sick ward.

But the hurried departure of Richard Pemberton and his family prevented their discovering their mistake.

And now Ellen, with her children, was fast recovering. One of the first questions she asked on reaching the sick ward and being laid upon the fresh sweet bed was:

"Where are my children?"

"They are here," replied the nurse, "they have had the cholera, but are now out of danger, but you must not talk."

Ellen, ever docile, resigned herself to slumber, but the next morning her first inquiry was:

"How are my children—can I not see them?"

"They are getting well; they have been removed this morning to the ward of the convalescents, where you may be carried in a few days if you are patient and do not retard your recovery by restlessness," replied the physician who was in attendance.

A few days after this Ellen was well enough to be removed from the sick to the convalescents ward. Here she found two of the children running about and amusing themselves, only gently and quietly as if the hushed air of the place subdued them.

But where was the third? Here was her boy, Willie, and here the orphan child, Sylvia Grove, but where, oh, where, was her darling child, Honoria? Dead, perhaps, and they would not tell her.

The pang that seized her heart at the thought almost threw her back into illness. It was only for a moment.

She called Sister Mary, whose hour of attendance it happened to be, and asked in faltering tones for her youngest child, adding, as she bent eagerly forward, and fixed her pleading eyes upon the nurse's face:

"Tell me, oh, tell me at once; do not keep me in suspense even if she is dead. I have suffered so much that I could bear even that."

But Ellen's throbbing throat, quivering lips, and pale face contradicted her words, and the nurse hastened to say:

"She is not dead, poor dear, no, by no means. She is very well—she has not even been sick."

With a deep sigh of relief, Ellen sank back in her chair inquiring:

"Where is she?"

"Where you can get her again if you wish it, my dear, though I advise you to let her remain where she is."

"Where?"

"A wealthy and most estimable lady of the highest rank, who has no children of her own, has taken her away with the intention of adopting her, my dear."

"Without my leave?" exclaimed Ellen, all the mother's instincts of possession flashing from her eyes.

"My dear, you can get her again, if you want her. Of course you can. When the lady took her from this place you were—"

The nurse suddenly paused, she could not tell Ellen that at the moment the child was taken away, she was left in the ward of death.

"Well?" asked the latter.

"You were very low; we—the lady—it was very kind of her to wish to take the orphan, you know."

"You all thought that I was dying, and she wished to adopt the destitute child. Yes, it was very kind. Oh, it was very kind," said Ellen, deeply moved.

"Ah, if you knew how kind, how good, how saintly she is. That blessed lady preferred to remain in town during the rage of the cholera, risking her life, and devoting her time, money, and personal attentions to the sufferers."

"I wonder she did not take one of the other children—especially why she did not take Sylvia Grove, who is really an orphan, and no child of mine. Now, Sylvia would have suited her purpose exactly," said Ellen, passing her fingers thoughtfully through her beautiful hair, and still inspired with the mother's instinct of possession rather than by the recollection of the many great advantages that might accrue by this adoption to her own child. "Yes," she added, "Sylvia, with no mother to claim her, would have been just the child for the childless lady. Do you know why she took Honoria instead of Sylvia?"

"My dear, the two children were as ill as yourself then, only Honoria was well. Besides, how could she have known that one of the three children was

an orphan when we did not know it ourselves?" "Ah, true. I'm all in the dark about what happened after I was taken ill. But, nurse, who is the lady that wishes to adopt my child? You told me she was of high rank. What is her name?"

"Mrs. Richard Pemberton!"

"Mrs. Richard Pemberton?"

"Yes—the minister's wife."

"Mrs. Richard Pemberton!" again exclaimed Ellen; "why, she is not childless. She has a little girl or boy—I forget which—or at least she had one three or four years ago," said Ellen, gravely, her thoughts painfully reverting to the sad time when she first heard of the minister's child.

"Oh, yes! she had a beautiful little girl, whose angelic loveliness was the theme of every tongue, but she lost that child so terribly. It was drowned in the river. While they were all on a steamboat excursion that child fell overboard and it was drowned."

"Good heavens! I never heard that before. Oh, how awful! And to think I envied her once. And now," exclaimed Ellen, covering her face with her hands, and shuddering. At length she raised up her face and inquired: "Where is Mrs. Pemberton now?"

"She left the city several days since for Coverdale Hall, their country seat."

"And took Honoria with her?"

"She took the whole family, I understand," said the nurse.

The conversation ceased here.

The nurse's term of attendance was up. So she arose to take leave, and departed, to be replaced by another.

Ellen O'Donovan, left alone, fell into deep thought, the result of which was the clear appreciation of the immense advantages that must accrue to her child in being adopted by Mrs. Richard Pemberton, and a determination that she would for the present leave her in that lady's undisturbed possession, resting on the knowledge that she could at any time she pleased reclaim her little daughter. While she was still turning these matters over in her mind, the door opened and old Marian, who was now quite well, entered to see her mistress. The old woman cried a little, but soon recovered herself, said she was glad to see "Miss Ellen" getting along so well, and talked cheerfully of how much better she hoped they would be able to do when they could leave the infirmary.

Ellen told her to bring a chair and sit down, for she looked still too weak to stand.

She sat down, and Ellen told her all that had come to her own knowledge about the children, and even sought the advice of the humble, but faithful and conscientious old servant.

Aunt Marian earnestly advised her to leave her child in the charge of Mrs. Pemberton, and not interfere in any way—not even to send a message, or write a letter—until the child had remained long enough with Mrs. Pemberton to win that lady's heart.

"Then even if you've a mind to take her back, the lady will do a good part by her," concluded the old woman.

Ellen's convalescence was very rapid. The time was approaching when she felt it would be necessary to leave the infirmary, or be placed upon the pauper's list.

Autumn was also advancing, and it was expedient to provide her children with some sort of a home for the winter, and herself with some occupation by which to supply them with food and clothing.

While Ellen was anxiously and painfully cogitating these subjects without being able to see a ray of light in the darkness of the present prospects, she received a message from old Mr. Goodrich, saying that he was coming to see her in a few hours with good news.

"Good news! What good news could come to her?" she asked.

She did not believe in it at all. The only possibility she could think of was that Mrs. Pemberton, having heard of her unexpected recovery, had determined to provide for her.

And this Ellen thought she could not submit to. It would seem to her like selling little Honoria for a price. No, indeed; if she gave the child, it should be a free gift for the child's good; she could not receive any assistance that might look like pay, or, what was worse, alms.

But while she was still speculating upon this subject, old Mr. Goodrich came in with a cheerful, open smile and brisk step. Ellen rose to meet him.

"You need not tell me that they want to give me something for my little girl, for I won't take it, I won't indeed. I can't take pay, however well disguised, for my child, especially from those who—"

oh, indeed I do not think I can leave her there any more."

"What are you talking of, Ellen. I bring no message from Mrs. Pemberton. No one wants to pay you for your child that I know of. I come to tell you that you have received a legacy, not a great one, but one sufficient to place you and your children beyond want."

Ellen could only gaze in wonder.

"You know, Ellen, that your relative, Colonel Falconer, Willie's grandfather, is dead, I presume?"

"Yes, I heard it before I was taken ill; I was very sorry to hear it."

"He was very old, upwards of eighty, Ellen. He died full of years and good works."

"Well, you know, he owned much property in various parts of the country."

"I know."

"As usual, however, he has left the mass of his estate to his wealthiest relatives, but, Ellen, he has remembered you also. Do you recollect a small farm called Silver Creek, lying near Coverdale Hall?"

"Yes, I remember."

"Of fifty acres, half in timber, half clear, with a small dwelling-house and a few outbuildings."

"Yes, I recollect the place perfectly. It is very much out of repair, and no one has lately lived in it."

"He has left you the farm, all stocked as it is—no great fortune, Ellen, but sufficient to keep you, your children, and your servant in the necessities of life. I have been appointed one of the executors of the will, and only wait until you are well enough to travel to take you thither—if you wish to go, as I suppose of course you do."

Ellen took his hand and pressed it, saying:

"Oh Mr. Goodrich, to you I owe this piece of good fortune. You are the best friend I ever had. Oh, I am very thankful, very thankful."

CHAPTER XXII.

RICHARD PEMBERTON and his family were domesticated for a short season at his country seat, the far-famed Coverdale Hall.

Coverdale Hall was an ancient mansion. It was an irregular but massive edifice, with many-pointed gable ends and innumerable lattices and windows. The origin of Coverdale Hall was almost legendary in the neighbourhood among the country people. No one, perhaps, except Richard Pemberton and the educated few who interested themselves in the history and antiquities of the country, knew its history, and that history, dear reader, is wild, startling and absorbing in interest.

During the last two hundred years the hall had changed owners many times. It seemed to be so fatal to its possessors that no father that became its purchaser could pass it to his children. Either bankruptcy dispossessed him, or death left him without immediate heirs.

At last, after having passed through many hands, or, as the old story-tellers by the winter fires said, after having ruined so many families, the malediction resting upon the hall and its tenants became a received and recognised truth, and not a soul could be found to become its purchaser or lessee.

Thus the hall had remained unoccupied for nearly twenty years. Its patriarchal trees, ancient eaves and gables, became the home of myriads of swallows, bats and owls; it had been uninhabited, as we said, for nearly twenty years, when Richard Pemberton became its purchaser under the following circumstances:

One summer, when the strain of official duty was somewhat relaxed, when Mr. Pemberton had a few weeks at his disposal for recreation, it had pleased Augusta, who was a great lover of locomotion and the picturesque, instead of going to some fashionable watering place to take a rural tour.

Richard Pemberton had yielded to her wishes, and they had set out in their travelling carriage on a journey through the country. On the second week of their travel they approached the neighbourhood of Coverdale Hall.

Here Richard Pemberton made his usual inquiry as to whether there were any objects of interest in the neighbourhood. In answer to which he was told the legend of Coverdale Hall. The next day they appropriated the forenoon to visiting the spot and examining the old hall.

They passed the circular barrier through a deep defile, so narrow and winding as to leave its entrance and outlet entirely invisible. Augusta was almost too deeply impressed with the awful gloom and sublimity of the place, and the solitary grandeur of the old hall.

But Richard Pemberton was interested in the most luxurious exuberance of vegetation, proving, as it

did, the unexampled richness and fertility of the soil. He called her attention to a gushing spring of water in the bottom of the dell, and began to guess how many hundred gallons of water it threw off per minute, and to calculate its force as a water power.

It was almost impossible for Augusta to be interested in this severe utilitarian view of such a scene, and Richard Pemberton cut short his lecture on agriculture and hydraulics, and gently reproaching her for the want of a practical mind, they took their way towards the house.

There it stood with its massive grey walls, its many peaked gables pointing to the sky, and its numerous odd diamond paned windows reflecting back the yellow morning sunlight. They had the keys from the innkeeper and entered the house.

If the outside was an irregular building, the inside was a perfect labyrinth of rooms, passages, and staircases, with chambers and closets, and flights of steps turning up unexpectedly in the oddest places. Augusta was curiously interested, and the parlours and the bedrooms went into a dream about the former occupants.

"And here," she would say to herself, "in this deep bay-window of the sitting-room stood some old man's or woman's easy chair; in the alcove of this adjoining chamber stood a bed, and here between the windows was the place of a dressing bureau, in that recess might have stood some infant's crib. Where are they now? Child and mother, youth and maiden, patriarch and matron, who formed this household; where are they now? Passed away, scattered and gone, as every household will be in time, and desolate gardens, empty chambers and cold hearths are all that remain to speak of their passage."

So mournfully the lady dreamed, while her husband walked about examining the rooms, testing the stability of the walls, trying the strength of the timber, etc. He found the house very substantial and strong, in good preservation, and likely to last more centuries than it had passed through. He rejoined his wife, and in drawing her arm within his own said:

"Well, dear, this old mansion needs only a little superficial rejuvenating to be a very delightful residence. A dozen or two of nails driven here and there, a few hinges, a little plaster, paper and paint, a few window sashes and some glass are all that is required in the way of repairs. And for the rest, new furniture will convert this desolate house into a very comfortable home."

"Yes, for anyone who likes to live here," replied the lady, with a slight shrug of her shoulders.

"Would you not like it?"

"For a place to visit and dream about sometimes, yes? But for a home, no. It is too much a prison, too closely shut in. The house reminds me of some battlemented castle, and the circular barrier impresses me as impregnable fortifications."

Richard Pemberton laughed and pressed her arm and called her imaginative, too imaginative, and as they went back to the inn he expressed his regret at seeing a fine place like that going to ruin, and announced his determination to become its purchaser.

Augusta smilingly reminded him of the malison that rested upon the fatal roof; but Mr. Pemberton sternly rebuked the superstition that gave birth to such a false and mischievous notion.

The end of it was that Richard Pemberton, having no such weakness in his own character, disregarded the popular legend, and became the owner of Coverdale Hall.

The hall was thoroughly repaired and completely furnished.

It was in the fourth year after their marriage that he moved into the house.

The old people shook their wise heads and prophesied and waited to see what would come of it.

Little Maud was born at Coverdale Hall.

And when it was told in the neighbourhood that the mountain rosebud, sweet Maud, the beautiful child of Richard Pemberton, the sole heiress of Coverdale Hall, was lost, was drowned, every gossip in the country exclaimed:

"There! What did I tell you? It is just exactly as I said! Richard Pemberton will never transmit Coverdale Hall to any lineal heir of his? The maiden malison still rests upon the place! The murdered maiden's spirit still resides there?"

We said that on the first outbreak of the cholera the senior members of Richard Pemberton's family had fled to Coverdale Hall for refuge there.

They were soon joined by the girls, who were instructed to prepare the house for Augusta later in the season, and they had faithfully performed their duty in this respect.

Richard Pemberton and Augusta found in their country home the very perfection of comfort.

It was the 1st of October when Mr. and Mrs. Pemberton, after a three years' absence, arrived at Coverdale Hall.

Vegetation had just begun to turn, and glowed refulgent in the golden haze of autumn.

The mornings were frosty and bracing, the noons warm, bright, and mellow, and the evenings just so chill as to make the fireside a delight as well as a novelty.

At no time of the year was the country more inviting.

They gave themselves up with a perfect abandonment to the repose and recreation they so much needed.

The shooting season had commenced, and every morning Mr. Pemberton would equip himself, take his gun, and go forth for the whole day's sport.

Augusta found her mother and sister-in-law very busily engaged in doing her duty, namely: over-seeing any amount of pickling, preserving, drying and distilling.

Though Letty grumbled a great deal over all this fuss for nothing—for she complained that unless all these pickles, preserves, dried fruit, and cordials were put into a wagon and sent up to town before them, they would be of no use to anyone, but stay and gather mould in the damp closets at Coverdale Hall.

She said she had grown tired of having no fixed home, and of having to circle about, at the private house, sometimes at a mansion, and sometimes at Coverdale Hall.

She avowed she would be obliged to marry, if it was only to get settled, and that one thing was certain, she would never, with her brother Richard's example before her, think of marrying a public man, for public men were vagabonds upon the face of the earth, without any distinct occupation.

When Mrs. Pemberton presented her little adopted child to the family, they received the orphan with much tenderness, saying to each that Augusta, with her ample fortune, had a perfect right to choose her own pets.

Letty took the child on her lap, and said it was a pretty little thing, but that was no use, she could not love it.

She had made a vow never to risk her happiness in loving any other child under the sun. But at the same time Letty's eyes were so full of sweet affection that the little one looked up in her face, and told its little sad story in two words.

"Mother's dead!"

Letty impulsively pressed the orphan to her bosom while her tears of pity fell upon its bright head. Then Letty hastily arose and set the child in Mrs. Pemberton's lap, saying:

"Here, Augusta, take your child!"

Mr. and Mrs. Pemberton had been at Coverdale Hall a month, and November had already arrived before they received the unexpected information of Ellen Donovan's continued existence, and of her having come into possession of the Silver Creek Farm. It was with unalloyed pleasure that Augusta first received this news. But then succeeded much perplexity in regard to the adopted child.

Mrs. Pemberton knew that Sister Mary must have informed Ellen O'Donovan of her adoption of the little Honoria, and she wondered why Ellen had not written to her upon the subject.

She finally concluded that the mother deferred reclaiming her child until she should be comfortably settled at Silver Creek Farm.

By the middle of the month Mrs. Pemberton was advised that Ellen had established herself at her new home in the neighbourhood, and then she waited daily in the vain expectation of receiving a visit or a message from her. But days passed without any sort of communication from Ellen.

As the time approached when Mr. Pemberton would be obliged to return to the city with his family Mrs. Pemberton grew very anxious and resolved to make Ellen O'Donovan a call.

Silver Creek Farm was by the bridge path only six miles off, but by the carriage road, it was at least twenty miles distant. Mrs. Pemberton would have preferred to go in the carriage, for that would have enabled her to take the child to see its mother, but it was almost impossible—at least extremely inconvenient—for the lady to make the visit in a manner that would have detained her out all night. Therefore Mrs. Pemberton decided to take the shortest route—the difficult and dangerous bridge path.

It was a refulgent glowing autumn day when she set out on the ride. But we must precede her to Silver Creek.

(To be continued.)

DRIVING HORSES BY ELECTRICITY.

The French papers tell us of a wonderful invention, which will enable the feeblest amongst us to "witch the world with noble coachmanship." The horse of the future is not to be driven by ordinary reins, but by electricity combined with them. The coachman is to have under his seat an electro-magnetic apparatus, which he works by means of a little handle.

One wire is carried through the rein to the bit and another to the crupper, so that a current once set up goes the entire length of the animal along the spine.

A sudden shock, will, we are gravely assured, stop the most violent runaway, or the most obstinate jibber. The creature, however strong, and however vicious, is "at once transformed into a sort of inoffensive horse of wood, with the feet firmly nailed to the ground."

Curiously enough, the very opposite result may be produced by a succession of small shocks. Under the influence of these the veriest screw can be suddenly endowed with a vigour and fire indescribable, and even the Rosinante of Don Quixote would gallop like a Derby winner.

What is the effect upon the condition of the horse is not stated, but the "Siecle" finds itself able to congratulate M. F. Fancher upon "an invention equally original and salutary," and one which places in the hands even of an infant a power over the horse which is as sovereign as it is invisible.

THE MAD PRINCESS.—As is well known, the unfortunate and once beautiful Carlotta, wife of the ill-fated Prince Maximilian, has been for nine years deranged, and is now at the chateau of Laeken, under strict medical surveillance. As in similar cases, she recurs to the predilections of childhood, one of which was a passion for flowers, and, Ophelia-like, she spends most of her time over them, feeding as they do her once lively but now diseased imagination. Their attraction for her was touchingly manifested the other day. Eluding the watch of her attendants, she had fled from the castle, but when overtaken it was found impossible to induce her to return, except by the use of means which would certainly have proved hurtful. One of her physicians bethought himself of her morbid affection for flowers, and by strewing them from time to time before her she was gradually lured on her way back to the chateau, where a closer surveillance has since been placed over her.

THE DIAMOND BRACELET.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. Biggs, having written the note which had been delivered to Maya, had departed in the fly, as recorded. But once outside the home grounds of Belle Isle and upon the broad, shaded road leading to the little village of Tregaron, she kept an eager watch from the window of the vehicle for the second paragon. She passed it, waited until a turn in the road concealed it from the view of the driver, and then commanded him to halt. He did so.

"I've dropped my veil back there round the curve!" exclaimed the woman. "No, don't leave me with the horse. I'm afraid of it. I'll just run back myself. You can wait here."

The driver looked at her suspiciously.

"You don't come no tricks on me, mum!" he said. "You don't hook it, with your fare from Lostwithiel unpaid."

Mrs. Biggs turned upon him, flaming with wrath.

"Do I look like a swine?" she demanded.

"Here's ten shillin'—keep that till I get back if you're so suspicious of me, a rich person as has come into a fortune along of my datter as is a real Indian Big'un! And you just wait where you are, if I'm some arf an hour. I sha'n't be in no hurry to find my veil and get back to such a vehicle as you runs. But you'll be paid for waitin'. I knows what is due to my infer'ors."

The driver, mollified by the display of the gold piece, descended and opened the door, with profuse apologies. Mrs. Biggs clambered down to the ground with difficulty, sniffing importantly, but condescended to pardon his rudeness and suspicion, and waddled away, disappearing around the curve.

Tregaron park was enclosed with high iron palings, through which might be seen cool, green dells

and dusky glades, broad avenues, and stretches of shaded and undulating ground covered with thick green turf like velvet, upon which the red and fallow deer gazed leisurely through the long days, raising their heads shyly at the sound of passing wheels upon the highway.

But now, in the evening, no deer were to be seen in the park. Cool, deep shadows veiled the avenues and glades in one uniform gloom. Mrs. Biggs found her way readily to the gate she had mentioned, a small, high iron gate for horsemen and pedestrians. Two tall iron posts flanked the passage-way. The gate was locked.

Mrs. Biggs halted in the shadow of one of the posts, watching and listening.

The minutes past to her like hours. She grew eager, impatient, angry. The liquor she had imbibed at Lostwithiel had injured her temper, and her reception at Belle Isle, her failure to discover Sinda there, and the parting words of Lord Tregaron had made her absolutely savage.

After waiting some five minutes the idea dawned upon Mrs. Biggs that Maya did not intend to obey her summons.

"Does she think she can play off her airs on me?" she demanded, furiously. "Does she think she'll defy me to my face? If she's not here within fifteen minutes—I'll give her time enough—I'll march back to the castle and raise such a storm about her ears as she'll think doomsday has broke!"

She clung to the upright bars of the gate, and peered through into the shadows with glaring eyes. The sound of a hare scudding among the fallen leaves, the rustling of a branch, the flutter of a nightbird, these were all the sounds that came to her ears.

Her wrath grew with her waiting. Her hat fell back upon her neck, her frowzy hair was blown about her blinded eyes, and red, bloated visage, and her stumpy fingers clung to the gate like talons.

"It must be more than fifteen minutes," she said to herself at last. "I'll go back to the castle. I'll stop at nothing. I'll humble her pride. I'll—"

A light step came down the path, hurrying swiftly to the gate. A girlish figure, wrapped in a long cloak, came into view, and Mrs. Biggs fell back from her post as Maya came running towards her.

"So you've come, have you?" the woman exclaimed, savagely. "I'd just made up my mind to go back to the castle."

Maya unlocked the gate, having brought the key with her.

"Come inside," she said, coldly. "Step into the shadow or we shall be seen."

She craned her head to look out. The flyman was not in sight. She drew back into the park, and Mrs. Biggs followed her. The gate softly swung into its former position.

Neither Maya nor Mrs. Biggs noticed, in their pre-occupation with each other, that a man was skulking behind the trees, and approaching them stealthily.

The man was Wolsey Bathurst.

He had followed Maya from the castle garden without exciting her suspicion. He crept nearer to the rendezvous, recognising Mrs. Biggs without any surprise. He had supposed that the mysterious note Maya had received had contained an appointment for an interview.

It was his object to ascertain what Mrs. Biggs had to say to the girl who was secretly his wife, and he was presently so near to the pair that he could hear every word that passed between them.

"You asked me to meet you here, madam," said Maya, with an overbearing and supercilious expression. "What have you to say to me that you could not say to me in my own home and in the presence of my father?"

She flung back her hood and regarded Mrs. Biggs with an expression calculated to strike terror into the woman's soul. But Mrs. Biggs, fortified by liquor and animated by her native cunning, was not easily to be intimidated.

"Highly, tightly!" she remarked, with a sneer. "How big we do feel, to be sure!"

The girl drew herself back angrily, her pink bloom becoming a crimson flush, her eyes dilating, her lips curling in a furious scorn.

"How dare you speak to me in that way!" she ejaculated. "If you want money of me, you have taken a very poor way to obtain it. Get out of these grounds. Go! I say—"

Mrs. Biggs planted her feet firmly upon the sod.

"I'll go when I get ready!" she declared. "And if you give me any of your impudence, I'll take you with me! Why, you talk to me just as if I was a dog, you unattractive creature! You'd better change that tone of your mighty lively!"

"What do you want?" asked Maya, abruptly. "Money?"

"I'll tell you what I want when I get ready," said Mrs. Biggs. "Fust of all, we'll settle how we stands, miss. I won't take none of your airs. You'll have to eat 'umble pie to me, let me tell you, Lady Katharine!"

"I shall not remain here to be insulted!" cried Maya. "I shall leave you—"

She made a movement to depart.

The old woman's rage boiled over.

"If you go, it'll be the worse move you ever made in your life, miss!" she cried. "Do you take me for a fool? Or blind? Do you suppose that I can't see through a millstone? Do you suppose that all your shaller pretences and airs and graces have took me in? I know you!"

She uttered the words fiercely, giving to them a deep and sinister meaning. Her eyes glowed with a baleful fire. Half intoxicated and full of bravado, she was in a dangerous mood, and the girl knew not how to cope with her. A sick terror crept upon Maya. She caught hold of a sapling to steady herself.

"You know me?" she repeated. "Why, of course you do. I am the Lady Katharine Elliot."

"The Lady Katharine Fiddistick!" interrupted the old woman, roughly. "None of that nonsense to me! When I first seed the other gal and she said as she was my datter and owned up to it, I believed it! But when I seed you that night I doubted. There was eethin' about you as I seemed to remember, them pale blue eyes, so shifty and deceitful. Oh, I thought as I'd seen them afore! And I've had my doubt ever since, and now my doubt is anigh certainty—"

"What do you mean?" demanded the girl haughtily.

Again the old woman sneered.

"I mean," she said, "that there Cinder is none o' mine! There an't a bit of Biggs blood in her veins! With her grad ways, and her beauty, and in spite of her meekness and sweetness—I will say, as she have tried to be a good datter to me and respectful—she an't no more like me nor is the Queen of Shelby! Not in looks nor yet in disposition! She's a different breed, she is, and made outen different stuff, and I hadn't been a day with her afore I feels as if I ought to be servant and she ought to be missus! I've been hard on her, I own it. And she's been good and kind, I confesses that, a really believing me her own ma! But all the same, she an't none o' mine! Do you hear that? And you, you sarpiant, with your memory as you owned up to, you knew me! You knew me the night you fust saw me! You know me now: I read it in your eyes! Oh, yously creature! You are not the Lady Katharine Elliot: you are Rhody Biggs!"

Had the earth opened and yawned beneath her feet, Maya could not have been more amazed than she was at the declaration of Mrs. Biggs. She staggered back and fell heavily against the trunk of a tree, white and gasping.

Mrs. Biggs, half intoxicated, regarded her with malicious triumph.

The listener, Wolsey Bathurst, crouched in the outlying shadows, his white face and gleaming eyes wild with terror.

Maya strove hard to recover her self-possession. She conquered the faintness that came over her, and said, in a voice that she tried to render domineering, but which actually trembled:

"What do you mean, woman? You must be mad? How dare you speak such words to me? I am the Lady Katharine Elliot—Lord Tregaron's only child! How dare you dispute the fact?"

The old woman smiled grimly.

"None of your high and mighty airs with me, miss! They won't pass now. I've had my doubts all along. There's times when I've taken that there Cinder to be my own, but that was the first, and owin' to her ownin' of me. But now I've seen more of her, I can swear that she's not of my blood. But you, I know ye now, Rhody—"

"That name again! Cease your insolence, woman! If this is what you have to say to me, the sooner you leave these grounds the better!"

The old woman's grim smile deepened into a grim laugh.

"Them airs to me!" she ejaculated. "And I knowin' ye, Rhody? I know ye now by them shifty eyes o' yours; I know ye by that light, tow-coloured hair as is all curls, and curly it was as a child. You was always a lyin' creature. Rhody, an actress-like, as I thought 'd make a bally-dancer, bein' graceful, and always dancin', and gettin' pennies from the officers and soldiers for your dancin' and prancin', and you've blossomed out into a finer woman than I expected, but I know ye all the same."

You're not no lady Katharine Elliot; you're just plain Rhody Biggs—that's what you are!"

"You dare to repeat that falsehood, you creature!" flamed Maya, in an ungovernable rage.

"I dare repeat the truth to you, or to anyone else, miss," affirmed Mrs. Biggs, insolently and determinedly. "You're my datter, and a passin' yourself off as my lud's datter and a born ledly. It's my opinion as Cinder is the real Lady Katharine, that's what it is! And that there Topee, which his heathen name was, as was a Sepoy and revengeful, his revenge wa'n't all accomplished when you left Injy. It's bein' accomplished now. He has passed off a wash-woman's datter onto this here proud earl as the earl's child, and he's left the earl's real child to be took by the washwoman. And that's Topee's revenge, and a fine one it is!"

The listener repressed a savage groan. A conviction that Mrs. Biggs was telling the truth made him sick with rage and despair.

He had played a dishonourable part, taken advantage of a trust reposed in him to marry this supposed daughter and heiress of the earl, and now his act had met with a terrible retribution.

His wife was not nobly born, not rich; she was the daughter of a laundress—of a woman addicted to drink—who was coarse and brutal.

And this horrible old woman was his mother-in-law!

"And, to make it worse," he said to himself, "I do not even like Maya. I had a fancy for Sinda; I could have loved her, but Armand Elliot has won her love and will marry her, believing her to be the daughter of this old hag. I am ruined! Once the story becomes known, I shall be dropped out of society, I shall be hoisted out of England! Topee has indeed wreaked a terrible revenge!"

Maya had been silent for a brief space, struggling with her emotions.

Now she exclaimed, with reviving courage:

"You are entirely mistaken, my good woman. I cannot account for your hallucination—"

"Don't come that lofty style on me, Rhody!" interrupted Mrs. Biggs. "It won't do! You know that I am your ma. You remember the old barracks, and the washtubs, and the dancin', and the poor lodgin's, and all the rest of it. I know that you remember it all, and that you've took advantage of that poor Cinder a losin' of her memory! You always was artful!"

"I repeat that you are mistaken," said the girl, desperately. "You are mad—or drunk!"

Mrs. Biggs's wrath flamed up again.

"Say that ag'in!" she cried, fiercely; "or deny ag'in that you are Rhody Biggs, and I'll go and see Lud Tregaron! I'll tell him as you're my child, and we'll see if he thinks if I am drunk or mad!"

She made a movement as though to rush towards the castle. She was in a reckless mood that frightened Maya.

The girl knew that to further incense Mrs. Biggs would be to ruin herself.

She knew that Lord Tregaron was not content with his supposed daughter, that he had no fatherly affection for her, and that Mrs. Biggs's revelation would be to his suspicions and discontent like fire to tow. The woman must be kept from going to him at all hazards. She held out her hand, catching the woman's gown, and gasping:

"Stop! Stop! You shall not go! Would you ruin me?"

"Then own as I'm your ma!"

The girl was wicked, but she was also weak. As the woman stood above her with menacing eyes and malignant visage, a host of memories thronged upon Maya, a terror of the woman beset her, and the words formed themselves from her lips in a virtual confession of the relationship which the woman claimed.

"If you go to the castle with your story, Lord Tregaron will believe you and turn me out penniless. What will you gain by ruining me?"

"Own up—or I'll go."

A fierce battle went on in Maya's soul. The woman was reckless to desperation, and Maya's terror of her increased.

"I—I," she faltered. "Oh, how can I say what you want? I am the Lady Katharine Elliot!"

She wrung her hands, while the old woman laughed grimly as before.

"I have a mind to let you do your worst," the girl continued, "and yet—"

The woman wrenched her gown from Maya's grasp, and moved away.

"Stop!" half screamed the girl. "I—I own—"

"As I'm your ma?"

The girl looked around her with a tortured expression. Then she bowed assent.

"Say it out loud."

"Mother! How can you be so cruel to me?" said Maya, fiercely, her eyes gleaming, her heart heaving. "If you have any love or pity you would not torture me like this!"

"And if you have any love for me you wouldn't deny me when we are here all alone, without an ear to hear us. I don't know as I blame you, Rhody, for passin' yourself off as the earl's datter. You've got into a good berth, that you have, and I've no wish to get you out of it, only you musn't play no games on me, and the thing must be understood fair and square between us!"

Maya twisted her stumpy fingers together nervously, and drew her breath hard. Her fair face was sullen in its suppressed fury, and her heart was full of bitterest hatred towards Mrs. Biggs. She said, huskily:

"Why have you forced this interview upon me? Why have you compelled me to acknowledge you?"

"Because I need your help," was the prompt response. "Because I knew that you knew me, and I wasn't goin' to have my own datter a-ridin' over me rough-shod. Because you looked at me so scornful, as if I wasn't good enough for you to wipe your feet on. Them's why."

The girl's voice sharpened to a shrill whisper:

"Now that you've forced the truth out of me," she said, "what are you going to do? Shall you tell the earl?"

She awaited the woman's answer in breathless anxiety.

Bathurst noticed that her form seemed crouched for a spring, and that her face, in a ray of light that fell upon it, was haggard and desperate, and full of a strange and wicked meaning.

"No, I don't, affirmed Mrs. Biggs, seeing nothing of the girl's desperation. "I like you to be prosperous and a great lady. I like my datter to be wearin' jools and silks. I intend to keep your secret, Rhody. But in course you'll make my silence an object?"

"Yes, yes," said Maya, with a groan.

Mrs. Biggs came nearer, and her bleared eyes and bloated visage were pressed close to Maya's face as she scanned the features that had been so soft, but which had grown so hard and sinister.

There was no mother-love in the woman's countenance, only a malignant triumph that deepened the girl's fury and despair.

"You are very like me, although your looks are different, Rhody," said Mrs. Biggs. "At your age I was as fair as you are, and much such a figger, and at my age you'll look as I do now!"

The girl recoiled in a loathing she could not conceal.

"I tell you I won't be persecuted!" she exclaimed. "Don't come so near to me, with your foul breath. I don't want any of your reminiscences. You are a bad, selfish, heartless woman!"

"Oh, I am, hey?"

"Yes, you are! You sought your own safety at the time of the mutiny and left me to be killed by the Sepoys, for all that you cared! Don't talk to me of affection. There was never any affection between us even in those days. You are heartless, so am I. In that respect at least we are alike. You will keep my secret, if it is your interest to do so. Now what do you want of me? Speak plainly, and quickly!"

"A sweet way to talk to your own ma!" grumbled Mrs. Biggs. "But I have got an affection for you, bein' as you're my own child and only datter. If your brother was to see you—"

"He won't see me! If you tell him about me, you'll repent it. Don't drive me to utter desperation. Tell me what you want of me. Is it money?"

"Well, yes. If you're rollin' in riches, I might have my share. I want you to pay me an annuity reg'lar. A hundred pounds a year now, and ten times that amount when you come into possession of your property."

"Anything more?"

"Yes. If I leave you alone, Cinder will have to pass as my child, the real Rhody Biggs. Now she's run away along of old Fuller, as you know. And she's somewhere with Mr. Elliot, I presume, and perhaps married to him. Now you heard how the earl talked to me. If Cinder comes here my lud won't give her up to me. I shan't stand no chance in law beside this rich 'ristocrat. And so I shall lose Cinder and her jools, and you also, and everything, 'thout you use your influence with my lud, which is the p'int I'm coming to, as Cinder must come back to me immediately."

"Has Sinda any suspicions that she is not your child?" asked Maya, quickly.

"She may have a p'isions, but what is p'isions?" demanded Mrs. Biggs. "I was rough on her, I confess, and scolded her and struck her—"

"Struck Sinda?" ejaculated Maya, shrinking

back still further. "You struck her? Why Sinda is as gentle as she is spirited, and you struck her?"

"It was along of a friend of mine as I wished her to marry, and she set herself against, but marry him she shall! That's settled!" declared Mrs. Biggs, roughly. "If I leave you here, Cinder must be returned to me, along of her jools. And you must persuade the earl to send her back."

"It will be difficult. He loves Sinda better than me. It was always so. Every one, from the old Begum of Khalsar to Lord Tregaron, loved Sinda best. And the earl intends to adopt her as his daughter and co-heiress with me. It's a hard task you have set me. I have no influence with Lord Tregaron. He is determined to send me away to a boarding-school unless Sinda will remain at Belbo Isle as my companion."

"Difficult or not," said Mrs. Biggs, "you'll have to persuade the earl to return the girl to me, or you'll have to come in her stead!"

"Suppose that Sinda is married?"

"Then you'll have to let me know, and give me her address, for I shall follow after her, if I have to hunt all over Eurip. I'll have my share of them jools, which is between her and Simon, and which has 'em the Lord only knows. But that I'll get a third on 'em, that I know."

Maya sighed drearily. How to persuade Sinda to return to Mrs. Biggs, after the persecutions she had suffered at the woman's hands, she did not know. How to persuade Lord Tregaron to advise Sinda's return was also a problem she could not solve.

"It's more for your interest to have Sinda return to you, with or without her jewels," she remarked, shrewdly. "If you expose my secret, Lord Tregaron will turn me out of his house penniless. But while I remain here as his daughter I can provide for you. And if you keep Sinda as your child, Armand Elliot will, for the sake of decency, be compelled to allow you a pension. Then Sinda's magnificent jewels, which the old Begum gave her, should be divided with you. You see that my ruin means your ruin also. Your interests lie in keeping me here as Lady Katharine Elliot."

"Very true, and I am not one to go agin my interests. You do as I say, and I'll keep your secrets. It's all understood between us?"

"Perfectly. I will see that Sinda is compelled to return to you if she is still unmarried, or I will forward her address if she should be married. But one word more," added Maya. "Your son must not know of my secret. He must not be allowed to suspect that Sinda is not your daughter."

"All right. I'll keep as still as a mice," declared Mrs. Biggs. "What's that noise? Perhaps that dratted flyman is lookin' for me. I'll see you agin, Rhody. Whenever I send you a note, you must meet me as I app'nt. I'll go back to Lostwithiel and wait there for Cinder to come. And this day week you'd better have twenty-five pound ready for me."

She moved toward the gate. Not one look or word of affection had passed between the pair. But Maya now reached out her hand and caught again at the woman's gown. In the faint light that fell upon her face, Maya looked ghastly, wicked, terrible.

"I shall have to get the money of the earl," she said. "I'll have it ready at the time you mention."

Meet me at this park gate one week from to-night to receive it."

Mrs. Biggs's eyes were too bleared to note the struggle look on Maya's face. She assented to the girl's proposition, and the girl opened the door and thrust out her head, looking up and down the road. She beheld the flyman approaching, with an appearance of great inquisitiveness, and hurriedly withdrew from his possible observation.

"You must go," she said, hurriedly. "The flyman is coming this way. Don't forget—a week from to-night!"

She put her hand upon Mrs. Biggs's shoulder and gently thrust her out into the highway. She listened while the woman hurried forward, heard the flyman's surprised salutation and her light answer, and then, soon after, the sound of departing wheels.

Then she locked the gate and staggered back a few paces and stood in a little open space at the side of the path, and clasped her hands and turned upwards a white face full of desperate wickedness.

(To be continued.)

THE question of rebuilding the Palace of the Tuileries, destroyed by the communists, has again come before the Senate. It is considered probable that the halls, when finished and decorated, will serve as places for the exhibition of works of art—but the real use for a palace is for a sovereign to live in it. The one will begot the other.



[THE CHOSEN ONE.]

VESTA HARLOW; OR, THE INDIAN AMBUSH.

It was a lovely day in midsummer, and a lengthy emigrant train wound its way through a long line of hills a short distance south of the famous Sioux trail. Several of the waggons were fashioned after the well-known "Conestoga" fashion; they contained the female members of the train. There were grey-haired women and little children, with here and there a young maiden upon whose brow the coronet of years sat lightly.

The sturdy settlers who guarded the train were well mounted, and carried rifles across their saddle bows. A number rode a goodly distance in advance of the foremost waggon, while a strong party brought up the rear.

Beside one of the waggons very briefly described above rode a young man on the back of a beautiful white horse. He wore the romantic trappings of the Western scout or guide, and was the embodiment of health and strength.

His keen blue eyes did not roam from right to left as his steed picked his way over the rough road, but remained fastened on the lovely face that looked upon him from between the parted curtains of the "Conestoga."

It was the face of a young girl who could not have passed her eighteenth year. Her eyes were brilliant and full of depth, and the guide must have caught a ravishing glimpse of the golden hair that seemed to give light to the interior of the vehicle.

"You are going to leave us, then?" the girl said, more than half sadly, for the guide suspected that he had discovered the presence of a sigh.

"Yes, but not for a long time. I hope to rejoin

the train to-morrow," he replied with a smile. "We are just entering the true Indian country of the great West, Miss Harlow, and I intend to see the train through it."

"A thousand thanks. You have been into this country before?"

"Many times. I may say that I know every foot of ground it contains."

"Do you regard danger imminent?"

"Well—no," he answered, slowly; "but the truth is, miss, emigrants are never wholly out of danger here. However, I do not look for any trouble at present. The Indians are north of us. I have not seen an armed band on this trail for several years."

The waggons rolled wearily along, and the young guide continued to converse with the beautiful girl who seemed delighted with his presence. She asked many questions concerning the destination of the train, and clapped her hands with joy when he described the beautiful little valley which she expected would soon give her a home.

But the sun at last went down behind the hills, and with a smiling good-bye the hunter left the waggon and rode forward to the advance guard. He conversed a while with Captain Harlow, the father of the beauty in the "Conestoga," and then, with a parting waive of the hand, touched his steed with the spurs and rode rapidly away toward the north-west.

The night fell about horse and rider, and the stars saw them hastening on.

It was a broad trail that Lawrence Duke, the hunter, travelled now, and he did not draw rein until his white horse stood before the door of a small cabin situated underneath a jutting rock in the bottom of a darkened cavern.

The stars seemed farther than ever above him, for the cavern was very deep, but not wide.

He entered the hut and struck a light, thus proving that he was at home.

The horse remained outside, stirring not, though he looked like a ghost in the weird light.

The hours that flitted away left the hunter's horse before the low-browed door.

The faithful animal was waiting with patience for his master's exit, and he waited a long time without moving so much as a single ear.

But all at once he pricked up his long white ears, and gave a peculiar neigh, which brought the master excitedly to the door.

"Well, Snowbird, what is it?" he asked, noticing the action of the horse. "You never sound a false alarm; you have heard something."

Then the hunter placed his ear to the ground and listened.

From afar off came sounds like the rapid discharge of firearms; they were faint, but served to tell a tale which demanded immediate attention.

The unwelcome noise came from the north-east, and the hunter's face grew slightly pale from fear.

"Something's up!" Lawrence Duke exclaimed, when he had listened for some time. "War Cloud may have attacked the train."

The next minute he had vaulted into the saddle, and in a few minutes Snowbird had reached the level ground above the cavern, and was flying over the country as fast as his limbs could carry him. The master spoke encouragingly to the noble animal, and mile after mile was ridden over.

Foam dropped from the steed's mouth, and his heated flanks were covered with the same wonderful stuff.

Like a spectral being the white hunter rode across the darkened country. The ominous sounds grew each moment more distinct, and Lawrence Duke thought only of the train which he feared had fallen a prey to Sioux greed. The shots at last grew scattering, and by-and-bye these settled down upon the gloomy land ahead the silence of massacre and death.

Still the hunter did not relax his exertions; he urged the white horse on and on, until he came to a sudden halt. The stars enabled the hunter to see the deathly form which lay under the horse's feet, and he dismounted and examined it. A member of the advance guard of the train lay before him, with an Indian arrow in his breast.

"I wish I had remained with them," the hunter said, reprovingly; "but I did not think that the red fiends were so near. Here lies the first man; but he is not the only one whom I shall find. Something tells me that I shall find all of them just beyond the creek."

When Lawrence Duke rose and led his horse towards a narrow stream, there was a flash of vengeance in his eyes. His lips were pressed closely together, and he seemed to be nerving himself up to the point of beholding a frightful spectacle. Before he reached the creek he beheld several more arrow-pierced bodies, and knew that the unfortunate emigrants had fallen into a dastardly savage ambush.

But the most terrible of sights lay beyond the creek.

The light of the stars was not needed to show the hunter the picture of death and ruin that lay around.

The fire of several waggons tumbled into a promiscuous heap, revealed the work of the scarlet demons, and the scalped bodies of men, women and children told the scout that the tomahawk had spared no victim.

The ambush had been chosen with the well-known Indian dexterity, and the infernal scheme had been carried out to the entire satisfaction of the assailants. Not a single waggon had escaped plunder; the Indians, in their fury for the death of some of their number, had killed the very horses, and the ghastly evidences of a horrible massacre lay everywhere.

Lawrence Duke searched for a particular face among the dead.

He stooped over the scalped remains and looked into the cold and bloody faces, and while he looked he clenched his hands and his eyes flashed again. But his search was unsuccessful.

Vesta Harlow, the beauty of the train, was not among the dead congregated around the burning waggons.

"I cannot find her, Snowbird," the hunter said, returning to his gallant horse. "She is not among the dead. If we had been here I am confident that this terrible massacre would not have happened. We are going to save this beautiful girl, if, indeed, she has not fallen a victim to Indian barbarity. I know the fiend who led the attacking party. War Cloud and I have met before, and we are not friends. Come, Snowbird, we must go. The trail is broad,

and the man who has made it cannot be far away." With the last word on his lips the hunter sprang upon the horse's back, and a moment later was riding from the scene of death.

The uncertain fate of Vesta Harlow hung heavily upon his heart, and he thought of her as he urged his horse over War Cloud's trail.

The young hunter and the fair emigrant had been acquainted for but a few hours; but there had sprung up in his heart a love which time could not kill.

It was a love that thrived in adversity, and he murmured through gritted teeth as he rode along: "War Cloud shall know whom he has wronged. When he lifted his scarlet arm against the people of the train, he lifted it against Lawrence Duke, and heaven sparing me, there shall sweep over the Sioux country a demon whose thirst for Indian blood can never be quenched."

He uttered his words in fierce determination, and the horse, as if understanding them, increased his pace until he seemed to fly over the ground.

Two hours of hard, unwearied riding brought the hunter to the foot of a hill, and, as he halted suddenly, the sound of voices fell upon his ears, and he caught the gleam of fire above him.

"Not a whiney, Snowbird," he said, as if his horse understood English. "We have entered the jaws of death. A Sioux encampment is just above us, and War Cloud may be there."

CHAPTER II.

GOING back to the emigrants for a moment, let us follow the fortunes of Vesta Harlow.

The young hunter's words had rendered her uneasy, and she dreaded the approach of that night which was to be so terribly stained by the blood of massacre. She saw the long shadows fall with many feelings of dread, and the owl's hoot seemed to forebode impending evil.

She did not, could not fall back into the waggon and go to sleep, and for a long time she sat between the parted curtains and waited for the attack. More than once she thought of the handsome man who had just left the train in order to visit his canon home, which he said he had not seen for several months, and wished that he had not taken his departure. The train seemed endangered by his absence; he was so skilled in Indian "sign" and woodcraft.

But that was not all.

Vesta Harlow's heart beat fast as she dwelt upon the sound of his words—when she saw his manly and matchless figure. She did not try to persuade herself that the strange feeling was not love. She felt that if it was true, genuine love, she was happy.

The first shots made no sound that reached the ears of the occupants of the waggons. The advance guard fell dead behind the unerring arrow, and, like an eagle swooping upon his prey from the clouds, the murderous Sioux came down upon the train. A scene of confusion ensued.

The emigrants, although taken by surprise, fought bravely, but all to no effect. One by one they fell before the Indian's rifles, and at last, the demons fell upon the frightened tenants of the "Conestoga." Vesta Harlow saw the first blow and then shut her eyes, but only for a moment.

She could not sit in the waggon and tamely await the blow of the tomahawk which she knew was bound to follow the close of the battle.

She saw that the brave emigrants were fighting against hope, and determined to try to save her life. Fortunately the horses that drew the waggon had not been killed by the Indians, and, fearless of death by the bullet, the firm-hearted girl hitched them up before being discovered.

There were other women and several children in the waggon, but they were almost dead with fright, and the entire attempt at escape devolved upon the captain's daughter.

She shouted to the horses, which finding themselves harnessed to the "Conestoga" and maddened by the smell of powder and blood, dashed away. But Vesta's daring had a sad ending. It was suddenly discovered, and a number of balls sent whizzing after the team.

The horses were struck simultaneously and fell dead over the tongue, while the waggon was overturned, and its inmates found themselves in the grip of the ruthless red men.

The fiends needed no incentive to begin the work of massacre; they threw themselves among the struggling emigrants, and with tomahawk and knife, struck right and left without mercy.

Vesta Harlow, while defending an old lady, was jerked from the ground by a plumed Indian who rode

a powerful black horse, and held firmly before him on the saddle.

"White girl brave—brave enough for War Cloud!" said the chief, and the girl looked with fear and trembling into the face of the redoubtable chief, of whom she had so often heard.

War Cloud held Vesta securely until the massacre had ended, and then bore her away at the head of his band, laden with plunder, and the bleeding trophies of the fight.

The night seemed endless to Vesta Harlow.

Long after she had found herself the occupant of a Sioux wigwam on the slope of a beautifully wooded hill, the battle beside the creek rose fresh in her mind, and she heard the shots and screams, and saw the butchery again.

Her prison was War Cloud's lodge.

It was furnished grandly after the savage manner, and its dark faced possessor came occasionally to recount his brave deeds to the trembling white girl, and to tell her that she should never escape.

How quickly the beautiful home in the great undiscovered west had faded from Vesta's vision! and she believed that she had seen Lawrence Duke, the scout, for the last time.

The day was drawing to a close—the second day of her captivity in the village—when the Sioux chief entered the lodge with a gleam of triumph in his eye.

"Ha! ha!" he said, ferociously, in his triumph. "The pale hunter has fallen into War Cloud's hands. He came from the south; but he walked too close to the red man's lodge."

Vesta Harlow started.

What! another captive in the Indian camp? She was afraid to inquire into the matter.

"Pale hunter never ride from War Cloud's village on his white horse," he continued, looking into his captive's eyes. "To-morrow he will be tied to his horse, shot full of sharp arrows, and burned. Thus War Cloud treats the white men who trail him in the dark. Does the morning Lily know the pale face? Her eyes are full of fright."

Vesta could not reply.

She felt that Lawrence Duke in his eagerness to rescue her, had fallen into War Cloud's hands, and was reserved for a terrible fate. And she was powerless to avert it, for she saw the flash of irrevocable determination that lit the chief's dark eyes, and buried her pale face in her hands.

* * * * *

War Cloud had spoken truly.

Lashed to a tree at one end of the collection of lodges termed a village was Lawrence Duke, the young hunter. The thongs pinioned his body fast to the tree, and, to make him doubly secure, his arms had been bound upon his back.

Since his capture, which had fallen to the luck of a scouting party, he had tasted no food, and hatless he stood beneath the overspreading boughs, knowing that Vesta Harlow was a captive in War Cloud's lodge.

He saw the night fall about him with no hope of succour, saw the Indian guards stationed around him, and dreaded the coming day. His mind was filled with conflicting thoughts.

He would have given life itself for a few minutes' freedom. With such at his command, he would have dashed to the chief's tent, snatched the fair captive therefrom, and slain the butcherer of the train.

The night advanced, and the moon sank lower and lower, until nothing save the tip of its silvered crescent remained above the horizon. As the hunter watched it, he heard a noise at his side. He did not turn, for he supposed it to be the tread of his nearest guard, but was deceived.

The next moment a gigantic form appeared beside him, and the hunter with an inward ejaculation of joy, recognised his faithful horse. Snowbird, stripped of trappings of every kind, had halted beside his master, and was tugging at the leathern thongs that bound him to the tree!

The nearest guard had succumbed to sleep, and the face of the other was turned towards the far-off valley.

Lawrence Duke held his breath, while Snowbird worked for his deliverance. He thought that such a horse was worth his weight in gold, and gazed smilingly upon him.

At last the scout stepped from the tree a free man.

The guard slept on, but in the sleep of death, and master and horse stole away in the gloom; but they were not going to desert Vesta Harlow.

Half an hour after the singular rescue, a sneaking figure approached War Cloud's lodge. It had the shape of a man, but crawled on the ground like a

leopard. It drew nearer and nearer to the giant chief's domicile, the curtains of which it drew aside and peered in. Then the skulker became known as Lawrence Duke.

The remains of the fire that burned in the centre of the wigwam revealed the interior. War Cloud slept between his captive and the opening. The hunter saw the half-naked body of the renowned Sioux stretched upon the ground, and the demon of revenge rose uppermost in his heart.

But he stayed his arm and stepped carefully over War Cloud, and gently touched the captive, who awoke with a start.

The next moment, she found herself in the scout's grasp, and the retreat began. But Vesta's foot touched the chief's face as she was being lifted over him, and the giant leaped to his feet thoroughly awake in an instant.

"Pale face kill War Cloud before he take the morning Lily!" the chief exclaimed, as he drew the knife from his belt.

"Then thus I take her!" was the stern reply, and the hunter having released the girl, sprang upon the savage.

The struggle that followed was brief, but terrible.

A few minutes later, Lawrence threw himself at the feet of the chosen one of his heart, and they both thanked Heaven for their rescue.

And the war chief of the Sioux lay dead in the lodge!

The late captives were pursued, but escaped to one of the Government forts, where after a time there was, just as there should have been, a wedding.

Lawrence Duke has left the West, but before he departed, the Sioux paid dearly for their butchery of the emigrants! B. M.

JENNIE'S THANKSGIVING.

Heigho! so to-morrow's Thanksgiving;
For what am I thankful, I pray?
And the cherry-red lips took to pouting,
And the dimples quite vanished away.

I am thankful, 'tis true, for some comforts,
For father and mother and all;
But I am sure I'm not thankful that Harry
Took that other girl to the ball.

I was sure that he loved me quite dearly;
And, oh, I was thankful for that;
But my thankfulness somehow grew doubtful
When he lingered so long where she sat.

And when she picked out a pink rosebud
From those that she wore in her hair,
And gave it him, thankfulness vanished,
Though I stifled my maiden despair,

I'm thankful the year has been pleasant;
I'm thankful for friends near and dear;
I'm thankful my heart—well, no matter;
I think I'll not mention that here.

I'm thankful—ah! here comes Sir Harry,
He's wearing my blossoms of white;
I'm thankful—I'm thankful for all things;
I'm happy and thankful to-night.

M. A. K.

THE FASHIONABLE DOCTOR.

WE may be allowed to state at the outset, that it is not our intention to dwell on all the unwholesome points which are associated with the social evil of fashionable doctors. Those are serious enough, and numerous enough, which are common to an ordinary observer, without enumerating others that come only from special knowledge and a painful experience.

Fashionable clergymen, with their mixed complexions, who serve Him in lawn or Irish linen on Sundays, and the world in lavender-coloured gloves on week nights, who denounce general sinning in the pulpit, and render pink blushes and sweet smiles to the retailers of questionable stories in the club smoking-room, are no longer considered worthy even of contempt; they have become harmless, and it is certain that they have often succeeded in putting a number of good people to sleep.

The fashionable lawyer offends us but little—for that no amount of lip, or hair-dressing, good looks, or jewellery, can make up for lack of legal knowledge, or presence of mind; the only incongruity which is certainly distressing in your fashionable

lawyers is the art with which they conceal their cruelty, for everybody knows that a lawyer who cannot be cruel can never win a case. One can tolerate a fashionable lawyer, or even a fashionable bard, or a fashionable reviewer, whose chief sin against nature and good manners is his fondness for making jokes in quaint language concerning his digestion; the fashionable actor is equally bearable—he no longer swears or gets truculently drunk, he dresses well, and if he does absorb an unreasonable amount of attention from the girls, he bears the fatigue of their attentions with a grace that steals all artfulness from his art, and we like him because, although acting all the time, he acts so well. But your fashionable doctor is different.

Time was when men and women trembled in presence of a priest: grew pale on being brought into contact with a lawyer; lost their wits in shaking hands with a bard; grew merry in hobnobbing with a player. Enter the fashionable doctor into the drawing-room of to-day, and there is general exit of all healthy human emotion. He knows everybody's inside, and they know that he knows, and this mutual knowledge has a depressing effect.

Everybody's mouth is shut—his alone is open—everybody in that room of torture acknowledges herself in the plainest manner to be a lame duck, or himself to be a screw, and so long that this medicine man remains in that assemblage of cripples so long is everyone kept under the spell of disease, and, what is the singular part of the performance, anxious at the earliest moment to obtain a prescription; to go for advice; to beg, after long waiting, in a crowded room of anxious inquirers, the exalted privilege of paying a heavy fee for being allowed to talk in private of his or her own liver, or his or her mucous membrane.

For the pleasure of having this baptised impostor look down her throat for one single second, or for the pleasure it will give her friends, a lovely girl, who has nothing on earth the matter with her that the summer's breath could not heal, or Mother Nature's own embrace could not cure, will go through an ordeal as intense, searching, and appalling as an examination used to be to high-born women in the presence of brutal Christians who formed the secret conclave of the holy office.

Once confess to your fashionable doctor that you have got a head, a chest, a stomach, a spine, or an auricle, and it is all up with you. You get possessed, and once possessed of a fashionable doctor there is no power on earth to bring deliverance. Nor is deliverance desired. "Come and see me again on Friday," and the victim goes; again is let fall a golden tear, which the sun himself might have shed, which the fashionable doctor carefully puts into his bottle, facetiously labelled "Solution of New Guinea," and the game once begun it is carried on by means of an ingenuity which is as cunning as it is devilish.

We have recently been reminded, in regard to this kind of doctor, that professional character is altogether apart from the personal qualities of a professional man. Such, thank heaven, is sometimes the truth. It is a great pleasure to meet now and again with doctors who have not ceased to be men. But these are not fashionable doctors.

The love of money, the vice of vanity, the passion for power, as fierce as that of a fawning priest, has never come nigh them, for in great modesty and with a delicate taste for truth they long ago enlisted under the banners of Athens, and finding such perfect sweetness and freedom in the service of the goddess they would rather die than revolt; these doctors, however, not being fashionable, do not come within the scope of our censure.

But we are assured, on no less authority than the *Lancet*, and at a time no later than a Saturday ago, that it requires much acuteness and tact to avoid being captivated by the pleasant and popular doctor, or misled by his agreeable loquacity and the superficial sophistry of which he is master.

There is, we are informed, with a minuteness of detail which is suggestive of jealousy, an unctuous pleasantness, or it may be a sympathetic frankness about his manner dealing with persons and objects which beguiles the weak and impressible. "Few are safe in his company." This witness we believe to be true.

And yet no one regards this witness. The fashionable streets where fashionable doctors most do congregate are more thronged than ever with carriages containing invalids, who, if they had to earn their own living, would be in good health, and are only kept alive by going to see their dear doctor, have his dear eyes look down their dear throats, and feel his dear hands in their dear little pockets.

It will take heaven knows how many centuries before these charming women can be brought to know that it would do them ten times more good to throw

their gold into the Thames than give it for advice to a fashionable doctor, that it would do the doctor himself good—although we are not concerned for that—and the common-wealth would be improved in health, wealth, and godliness.

TRUE ENJOYMENT.

No one should suppose that real enjoyment consists in living a long time. That man and that animal lives the longest that passes through the greatest variety of scenes, and who is capable of feeling in a lively manner both joy and sorrow. The toad has been found enclosed and alive in the trunk of a tree, where it must have remained more than fifty years; and there is a wonderful instance related of one that was discovered in a block of marble, which it would be useless to tell how long it had been there.

Now, can anyone think that those two animals could have been so happy as the butterfly, which flutters so giddily over the meadows, and drinks the morning dew from the buttercup and honeysuckle; and which now and then, when he is weary, will sleep upon some sweet blossom and lay his wings at rest upon it? That little tender creature, however, has many more enemies than the long-living toad; and if it should escape them all lives but a few days. We do not say that the toad is in itself an unhappy animal, for we believe that He has given more happiness than misery to all His creatures. We only wish to show the reader that the butterfly, in its short but very varied career, experienced fully as much delight as the toad during its long-drawn and monotonous existence.

THE Queen has been graciously pleased to express her satisfaction with the condition and flavour of a sample joint of American fresh meat submitted to her approval.

FACETIE.

HIGH CORN.

"JOHN, how high has the corn got up?"
"Well, sir, that depends on the flight of the crows. 'Tis purty tall, anyhow, for I seed some of it go up out of sight this morning."

SEASONABLE ADVICE TO FARMERS.

MAKE hay in wet weather. Take opportunity to store water. In the midst of rain remember drought.

"SUCH A COME-DOWN!"

Or, Every Continent Its Own Music-hall.

SONG No. 1.—WE'LL TEACH 'EM WHAT'S WHAT!
(Part Song by Dame Europa and the Spirit of Bounce.)

DAME EUROPA:

There's a moribund empire, away in the East;
It's a thing of no import, a bubble—
And not to be held of account in the least,
Yet it's giving me oceans of trouble;
Suppose such a trifle were worrying you,
Now, pray, Mr. Spirit, pray what would you do?

SPIRIT OF BOUNCE:

Why, Madam, the thing is the lightest affair,
Quite the lightest affair in creation!
And to me it is simply as clear as the air
How to deal with this troublesome nation.
Pronounce but a word in your motherly way,
And, bless you! that nation will wake and obey.

BOTH:

Our envoys shall go with our potent advice,
And the Turk will be down at their feet in a trice,
Obeying their every word on the spot.
We'll settle the matter! We'll show 'em what's what!

(Chorus repeated with much self-satisfaction.)

—Fun.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW.

THE Conference has ended in smoke. Well, we shall of course cut Turkey after her returns for Conservative efforts to block her up.

—Fun.

A POPULAR DELUSION.

THE natives of Terra del Fuego believe that devils are the departed spirits of members of the medical profession. Our superstition varies a little. We hold that the spirits of the medical men cause them to be devils before they depart—from the medical schools.

—Fun.

COLD COMFORT.

RECTOR'S DAUGHTER: "And how are you off for coals?"

OLD MRS. BROWN: "Colds! Lor' blessy, miss, I've 'ad plenty on 'em this winter. I must expect 'em with my room attics."

R. D.: "Ah, that's all right, my father always likes you to be well provided."

—Fun.

A TREAT.

A CONTEMPORARY heads an article, "The Charity Organisation Society and the Treatment of Idiots." We acknowledge the connection of ideas, and for once feel satisfied.

—Fun.

DRUNK OR DYING.

(The policeman's comic song.)

As I was walking 'tother night
Upon my lonely beat,
A female give me such a fright
By fallin' at my feet.
"Git up," I sez, "old woman, or
I'll have to run you in."
She heaved a sigh as smelt, oh, Lor'!
Quite awful strong o' gin!

Spoken.—Yes, there she lay a-sighin' an' a-groanin'; but I knowed the complaint, so I just hoists her up by the arm and lugs her off to the station, a-saying to myself as I goes along: I wonder whether she's:

Drunk or dying, tiddy iddy fol,
Drunk or dying, fol lol lay,
Drunk or dying, whack fol de rol,
Drunk or dying, rum tum tay.

I lugs her to the station-house
And chucks her in a cell,
She lies as quiet as a mouse
Although I shakes her well.
I locks the door and goes away,
Next morn I'm horrified
To hear our surgeon come and say
That female's gone and died.

Spoken.—Yes, actually gone and died, and the worst of it was she'd got her head cut open as we never noticed, and the surgeon said she'd been chucked out of a cart or something, and was a-dying fast when I brought her in; but I sez, it's all bosh, sez I. She was drunk fast and broke her head afterwards. I should think a policeman ought to know better than a sawbones whether a civilian's:

Drunk or dying, tiddy iddy fol, &c.

It's more disgusting, on my word,
The row the public makes,
Such Bobbyry I never heard
About a few mistakes.
I never sees a female fall
Without I has a funk,
That if I takes her arter all
She'll die and not be drunk.

Spoken.—But it's their own faults arter all. The streets wasn't made for people to die in, and the perleece has got somethin' better to do than a-cartin' a lot of obstreperous civilians about, and a-feelin' their pulsies, and a-smellin' their breath, &c., just to see if they're:

Drunk or dying, tiddy iddy fol, &c.

—Fun.

"HANG OUT YOUR BANNERS."

THE creditors of Mr. R. B. Oakley, whose Co-operative Banner-factions resulted in his being at present a convicted felon, are, it is said, to receive a dividend of twopence in the pound. The belief of those few who vowed to stand by Banner to the last is likely to flag a little after this. Even their minimum figure was fourpence.

—Fun.

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

AUNT MARY: "Why don't you read, Tom, instead of lolling about?"

TOM: "Got nothing to read!"

AUNT MARY: "There's your first prize in Monsieur Jolivet's French class—a most delightful book!"

TOM: "How can I read that?—it's in French!"

—Punch.

EXTREME MEASURES.

POLITE FOXHUNTER: "But why won't you let us help you out?"

LADY IN THE DYCH: "Oh, dear! I'm fifteen stone without the mud! Do, please, send for a rope!"

—Punch.

THE FLOODS IN THE COUNTRY.

SWELL (reproachfully): "Haw, I don't call this dwy showwy!"

WAITRESS: "An' no wonder, sir! Master says he can't keep nothing dry this weather! There's two feet o' water in our cellar!"

—Punch.

DISAGREEABLE TRAVELLING.

MRS. GAMP lately had a patient under her care, whom she proclaims to all her acquaintance as the most wonderful of travellers.

"Yes, indeed, my dear, he tell me he've been twice through the Sewage Canal!" —Punch.

THE EASTERN QUESTION AT PRESENT.

WHAT next?

—Punch.

"OUR FAILURES."

HUSBAND: "I say, Lizzie, what on earth did you make this mint sauce of?"

YOUNG WIFE (who has been "helping" cook): "Parsley, to be sure!" —Punch.

"CLOUDS in the East." No wonder, now the Conference has ended in smoke. —Punch.

INTERESTING FACT.

THE first attempt to arrest the Rev. A. Tooth was unsuccessful. It is asserted that it was a dentist who at last succeeded in drawing him. —Judy.

A NICE quiet place.—The still-room. —Judy.

THE DELIGHTS OF "THE CHACE."

Scene: The Midlands, Jan., 1877, Time, 6.30 p.m. Dinner at 7.

BEHATED FOXHUNTER: "Which is the shortest way to Martingale Hall?"

MEDITATIVE RUSTIC: "Martingale 'all. Martingale 'all. Martingale 'all. Ah! That's old Squire Snaffle's, that is. Oi've worked there a matter o' ten year! Let's see. That's foive mile from 'ere, that is, shortest way? Let's see. Why ye goo deown 'ere, this 'ere lane, as fur as ye can goo, and then ye turn t' right, and then ye— Ah! but that's all under six-sivin fut o' worter, that is! An' there ain't no other way to get there as Oi knows on! Good noight, sir!"

(Proceeds meditatively.) —Fun.

LETTERS IN THE BIBLE.

A boy in Sunday-school proposed a question to be answered the Sunday following:

"How many letters does the Bible contain?"

The answer was three million five hundred and thirty-three. The superintendent says to James:

"Is that right?"

"No, sir," was the prompt reply.

"Will you please tell us how many there are, then?"

"Twenty-six, sir."

THE CAPTAIN'S DOG.

A GOOD tale is told at the expense of a gallant officer who is well known for his admiration of fox terriers.

He is so fond of the breed that he never refuses a good dog, and the consequence is that he is now the owner of a pretty large collection.

The other day, knowing his weakness in this respect, a friend in the country played a cruel trick upon him.

A letter arrived asking whether the captain would like a regular beauty by Blacking Brush out of Boot Jack, or some such names, with a pedigree as long as my arm.

"Certainly," said the captain. "Send him up at once."

The dog arrived, the captain undid the hamper with trembling hands, and the deception was immediately apparent; it was a dog certainly, but that is all that could be said of it.

The captain twirled his moustache; the dog wagged his tail.

"What the deuce shall I do [with it?]" meditated the captain. "It isn't worth paying the railway fare down to my place"—he lives just out of town—"for such a brute as that!"

Here a friend luckily and casually turned up; the captain offered him the dog—on condition that he would take great care of it, and always give him the first refusal if he wished to dispose of it at any time—and the offer, to the captain's great delight, was at once accepted.

The next day business called him up to town again, and what was his horror on going to his club to see his dog displayed on a table in the club-room awaiting its owner.

STATISTICS.

AREA OF BRITISH INDIA AND THE POPULATION.—In the Annual "Statistics Abstract" British India is described as having an area of 897,004 square miles, with a population of 189,613,238 (the Colonial volume put it at 190,663,923 in 1871), and 37,041,259 inhabited houses. The area of the Native States is estimated at 589,315 square miles, with a population of 50,325,457 souls, bringing the area up to 1,486,319 square miles, with 239,938,695 persons living upon

it. There are also in India 196 square miles of French possessions, with 259,981 inhabitants; and 1,616 square miles of Portuguese possessions with their 527,517 people, showing for all India 1,488,125 square miles, and 240,726,193 souls. British India has, in round numbers, 98 million males and 92 million females; 67 million children under 12 years of age and 123 millions of older persons. There are in British India 139 million Hindoos, 41 million Mahometans, three million Buddhists and Jains, above a million Sikhs, and 900,000 Christians.

THE Anchor Liner California picked up in mid-Atlantic an owl, which Captain Ovenstone, who caught it after alighting, thinks must have come from the Western Islands, which was the nearest land at that time. A heron accompanied the strange wanderer, but was too wild to be caught.

CONVERTING CABBAGES INTO TOBACCO.—The officers of Customs in London have just stopped what was doubtless the commencement of a most nefarious trade. They have seized, under powers given them by Victoria 39 and 40, sec. 42, cap. 36, a harmless-looking fluid which, on analysis, proved to be nicotine. The importation, which was from Hamburg, was exceedingly small in bulk, being only twenty-three gills. Its terrible potency may, however, be imagined from the fact that it was the produce of 2,500 lbs. of tobacco sweepings mixed with alcohol. The presumed intention of the Hamburg chemist was that it should be used as a ready means of converting our early York cabbages into the finest Havana tobacco. The Commissioners of Customs retained a sample for their museum and ordered the rest of the mixture to be returned to the port of shipment. Would they not have done better had they retained the entire importation.

I'LL LOVE NO ONE BUT THEE.

When far away from home and friends,
And all that's dear to me,
There's one that's ever in my mind,
And that, dear one, is thee;
And if we ne'er should meet again
Upon life's stormy sea,
I say to you these words are true,
I'll love no one but thee.

'Tis said that absence conquers love,
But ah! that cannot be!
For while the years pass slowly by,
My heart still clings to thee;
Yes, clings to thee with love as strong
And pure as gold can be;
Until I sleep where willows weep
I'll love no one but thee.

The mother bird may leave her young
To starve within their nest—
The points of compass change about,
The east be in the west;
The sun shall rule no more the day.
The world in chaos be,
And still, when all these changes come,
I'll love no one but thee. B. H.

In spite of the very unfavourable weather, the Brighton aquarium has been well attended during the holidays. The institution never contained a larger or more interesting collection of specimens than it does at the present time.

GEMS.

You may depend upon it, that he is a good man whose intimate friends are all good, and whose enemies are of a character decidedly bad.

Straws swim upon the surface, but pearls lie at the bottom. Showy parts strike every common eye, but solid ones are only to be discerned by the most accurate observers of the human head and human heart.

There is no work of art which can do greater honour to the talents and taste of a married woman, and which she ought more readily to polish, than—her daughter.

Nature makes us pure only when we want necessities, but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

Marriage renders a man more virtuous and more wise, the father of a family is not willing to blush before his children.

Sin brought sorrow into the world; it was this that made the world a vale of tears, brought shadows of trouble upon our hearts, and so deluged the world.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

FRUIT FOR FOOD.—If a child's digestion becomes impaired and the gastric juice becomes weakened or defective in quantity by over eating or bad food, the whole alimentary canal becomes clogged and filthy, and furnishes nests for such worms as will breed there. In this weakened condition of the system they cannot be destroyed by the process of digestion, and hence great harm comes from them. Now, it is an interesting fact that fresh, ripe fruit is the best preventive for this state of things. Dr. Benjamin Rush pointed this out one hundred years ago. He made a series of experiments on earth worms, which he regarded as more nearly allied to those that infest the bowels of children than any other, with a view to test their power of retaining life under the influence of various substances that might be used as worm medicines. The results proved that worms often lived longer in those substances known as poisonous than in some of the most harmless articles of food. For instance, in a watery solution of opium they lived eleven minutes; in infusion of pink root, thirty-three minutes; but in the juice of red cherries they died in six minutes; black cherries, in five minutes; red currants, in three minutes; gooseberries, in four minutes; whortleberries, in seven minutes; and raspberries in five minutes. From these experiments Dr. Rush argued that fresh, ripe fruit, of which children are very fond, are the most speedy and effectual poisons for worms. In practice this theory is found to be correct.

A VERY small quantity of oleic acid dropped upon a sample of gum copal, and but slightly warmed, will dissolve that gum completely.

TO MEND CHINA.—Take a very thick solution of gum arabic in water, and stir into it plaster of Paris, until the mixture is of a proper consistency. Apply it with a brush to the fractured edges of the china, and stick them together. The whiteness of the cement renders it doubly valuable.

CLEANING BLACK LACE.—Wash it in skimmed milk, do not rub, but constantly squeeze it softly. When it seems clean, take it out and put it into a little clean milk, also skimmed, give it another squeeze, and lay it out directly on sheets of stout paper; touch it every here and there with the fingers to draw out the scollops and edges, lay the sheets of paper over the lace, and a heavy weight over all till dry. If laid on anything soft, the moisture is absorbed, and the lace will not be so new looking.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE salmon season of 1876 was not a peculiarly remunerative one to either the net-fisher or the angler for salmon. Some fisheries are said to have reaped a fine harvest, but in many waters fish were not very abundant, and disappointing captures were the rule and not the exception. This was specially so in the case of anglers, who up to the last waited in vain for fortune to favour them. On one or two Irish rivers sport was exceptionally good, and a fair proportion of fish landed; but in the majority of the larger rivers the take of salmon during any portion of the season could not be said to be anything except fairly good. The future prospects of salmon fishing are not very hopeful. Owing to the discussions which have been going on between the proprietors in several districts, the proper protection of some important rivers has been sadly interfered with, and on two of our larger waters a total cessation of all watching during the winter months is threatened.

The students of Queen's College, Belfast, fired, no doubt, by the example of the scholars of T.C.D., presented their countryman, Barry Sullivan, with an address, on the occasion of his concluding an engagement in that city. A torch-light procession was formed at the college and the students paraded the principal streets en route to the theatre. At the close of the play—Colley Cibber's "Richard III."—a deputation of the alumni in hoods and gowns came upon the stage, and an address was read by Mr. M'Mordie, an attorney of Belfast, to which Mr. Sullivan made "a suitable reply." The cream of the joke was that the addressee was complimented on his Shaksperian performances, and the addressers thanked for their discriminating praise.

A MAINE clergyman recently declared that if "all the bones of the victims of intemperance could be gathered and made into a pyramid, no plain could be found large enough for its base to rest upon, and the planets would have to be swept aside to make room for its apex."

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EDWIN.—Don't destroy the lady's happiness as well as your own, by trying to overcome your love for her, through fear of being thought a fortune-hunter.

KATE.—You are very inconsistent to receive so much attention from a married man. It may not matter to his wife, but it will certainly cause much gossip about you.

BER.—After a young man has paid particular attention to a lady for six months, and she has always seemed pleased with his company, we see no reason why he should fear a refusal at her hands.

FRANK.—Enjoy life as it comes, and don't pass all your time in striving to become rich. Riches are often dearly bought at the expense of health and strength.

H. Y.—Associating with well-educated and refined people will do much more towards refining your manners than all the books of etiquette ever published.

HARRIET M.—If the young man's love for you is not strong enough to induce him to alter his habits, do not marry him in the vain hope of reforming him.

IDA.—The fellow is a heartless knave, and the sooner you dismiss him the better. In the next letters you address to a lover be more cool in your expressions, and then you need not be very much alarmed at their being exposed.

CHARLES C. has a tipsy wife, who neglects his home and children, and plunges him into debt. What shall he do—put her away, or try once more to reform her? The latter, of course, and be gentle in your operations. Try the following as a starting experiment: Dr. Pitcairn, in attempting to break the habit in a Highland chieftain, exacted a promise that the latter would every day drop as much sealing-wax into his glass as would receive the impression of his seal. He did so; and as the wax accumulated, the capacity of the glass diminished, and, consequently, the quantity of whisky it was capable of containing. By this plan he was cured of his bad habit altogether. If this should fail, we should advise either temporary confinement or a three months' divorce from bed and board.

STARLIGHT BESSIE.—You evidently have been misled as to your position with the young man you describe. He does not intend to continue his visits, and you cannot anticipate such meetings as ever satisfactory to either party. It is always wise for girls to consult their parents or nearest friends, when a proper understanding should be entered into.

K. D.—The puzzle is easily solved. Your attentions to the other lady excited your sweetheart's jealousy. Call on her the same as ever, and do not refer to the matter at all.

J. J.—You had better reason with the lady you say you love, and try and induce her to wait for a more suitable occasion for your marriage with her. If she is a sensible girl she will readily comply with your wish.

C. W.—Wash the brass work with roche alum boiled to a strong ley, in the proportion of an ounce to a pint. When dry it must be rubbed with rottenstone.

E. B.—Be careful to clean with white of egg and warm water, then coat the same with white size; when dry varnish with white mastic varnish, which is the best. Paper varnish is less expensive.

ZELDA.—In a marriage ceremony each person is asked if they know of any impediment why they should not be so legally married, and either party marrying by any other than their proper name is a lawful impediment, but such breach of the law does not invalidate the marriage, but renders the party so offending liable to punishment as the law directs.

CUTLER.—Rose water, three ounces; sulphate of zinc, one drachm; mix. Wet the face with it. Gently dry it, and then notch it over with cold cream, which also dry gently off.

BEET.—You express yourself as being very fond of the lady you describe as being very beautiful, and is admired by a great many. Now, we cannot see why you should expect any more favours of her than any of her other admirers unless you have so far settled yourself to make

this lady an offer of marriage at some reasonable time, and such offer should, with the lady's consent, be communicated to her parents, and, if accepted, you will then have the reasonable expectation that she will favour you only with her leisure hours.

HARRY THE COACHMAN, twenty-two, would like to correspond with a young lady about eighteen, dark, good-looking.

THE WHISTLING BOY, twenty-six, fair, medium height, auburn hair, hazel eyes, good-looking, fond of home and children, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be of medium height, dark, good-looking, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

ST. AN CARSTAN, twenty-three, dark, medium height, blue eyes, considered good-looking, good-tempered, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be good-looking, domesticated, of a loving disposition, fond of home and children.

THE PET OF NO. 5 BOOM, twenty-five, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes, good-looking, and of a loving disposition, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty-two, dark, good-looking, fond of home, and domesticated.

THE FLOWER OF NO. 9, MISS, twenty-two, brown hair, hazel eyes, considered good-looking, of a loving disposition, fond of home, would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty. Must be good-looking and domesticated.

MAGGIE, DEAR, WI' ER'N SAE BONNIE.

Maggie, dear, wi' ee'n sae bonnie,
Amast like the sapphire hue,
Weel I keen, the times sae mouny,
That ye said ye wad be true.

Noo' ye're fause, I'm broken-hearted,
Hae nae mair a thought o' me,
Gin' ye're frae, ye're loe' noo' parted,
I'm awa' across the sea.

Hand yer whist, my dearest Johnnie,
I wis only jokin' ye,
I hae no intention, ony
Words and sever you an' me.

Hae I loe' my bonnie sailor,
This pair hairt can ony know;
Whan ye've bin' awa' a whaler,
Whaur the icy breezes blow.

Come to my breast, my sweet dearie,
And let me kiss those tears awa,
Let my honest love noo' cheer ye,
Gie' us baith bright hopes an' a'.

I hae gowd enough tae wed ye,
Snae to kirk we'll gang awa;
Gang ye hame, an' finely braid ye
In your bright snood and kirtle braw. F. S.

CAPTAIN OF SEA-WALL PARTY, twenty-six, dark brown hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a young lady, good-looking, fond of music, one who would not mind going abroad.

MAUD and EVA, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen, about twenty-nine. Maud is medium height, dark brown hair and eyes, of a loving disposition. Eva is tall, dark hair and eyes, and fond of home.

G. A. M. G., twenty-three, fair complexion, considered handsome, would like to correspond with a young woman twenty-one, fair, and fond of music.

LAUGHING JOHN would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. He is twenty, dark brown hair, and medium height.

ALICE and FLORENCE, two shipwrights in H. M.'s dockyard, wish to correspond with two young ladies between twenty and twenty-one. Both are dark, and of medium height.

ANNIE M., nineteen, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a young gentleman of a loving disposition.

SAM, twenty-four, would like to exchange carte-de-visite with a young lady about twenty-one. Must be domesticated.

ALICE and FLORENCE, two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen. Alice is twenty, considered good-looking, and tall. Florence is nineteen, considered good-looking, and tall.

LILY OF THE VALLEY wishes to correspond with a dark gentleman about twenty-six.

E. B., a widow with four children, twenty-nine, fair, with blue eyes, and fond of home, would like to exchange carte-de-visite with a widower about thirty-five or forty, dark, and who must be fond of home.

SICKER, good-looking, would like to correspond with a young lady from seventeen to twenty-six. Must have £150 a year.

ETHER, nineteen, dark, tall, thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-one. Must be of medium height, dark hair, blue eyes, thoroughly domesticated.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

RACHAEL L. is responded to by—Valentine Vox, would like to exchange carte-de-visite.

NELLAN by—Arthur, dark. Would like to receive carte-de-visite.

WALTER by—Esher, eighteen, dark, medium height, and of a loving disposition.

VANGUARD by—Nellie, fair, grey eyes, domesticated, good-looking.

THOMAS by—Kato, handsome, tall, dark hair, and eyes.

SARAH by—Morphens, medium height. Think she is all she requires.

ROBERT L. by—Minnie, good-looking, fond of home and children.

LIZZIE by—Nelly A., considered good-looking, fond of home.

REBUS by—Louisa, considered good-looking, fond of home.

FRED B. by—Jennie W., seventeen, tall, fair.

THOMAS by—Juliette, brown hair and eyes, medium height, considered good-looking.

LOUIE L. by—Jack, nineteen, tall, dark hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition. Would like to receive carte-de-visite.

TOM M. M. by—Mary W., nineteen, brown eyes, and hair.

AMELIA by—Jack, twenty-three, medium height, grey eyes, curly hair, dark complexion. Think he is all she requires.

MAY by—Alfred, twenty-four, medium height, and blue eyes.

ARTHUR by—Louie, twenty-two, fair complexion, good-looking.

CHARA by—T. W., nineteen, tall, good-looking, medium height.

D. K. by—Gertie, twenty-four, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

CARRIE by—Charley, twenty, dark, tall, and good-looking.

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